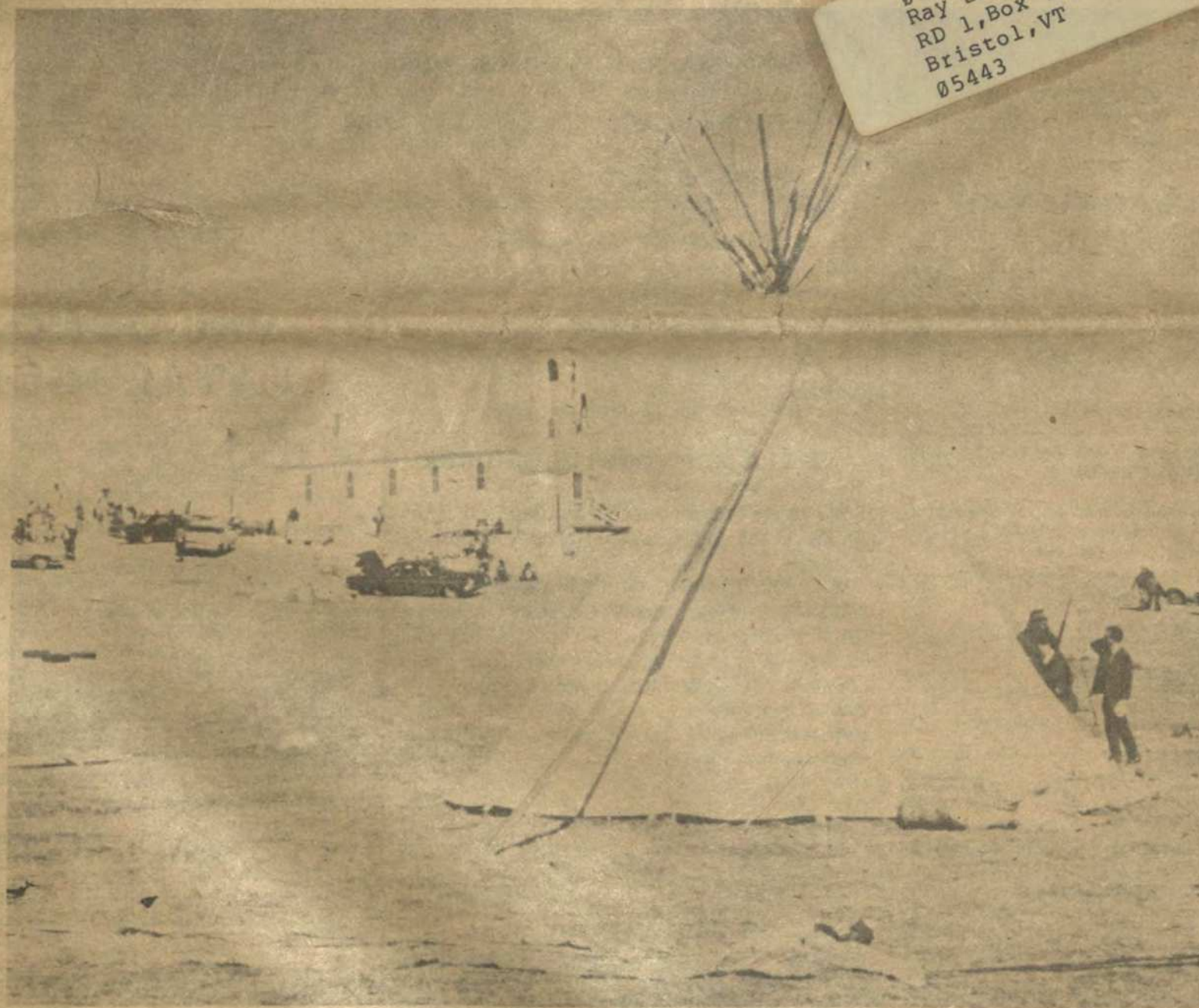




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ON THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF WOUNDED KNEE:
*A greeting to all the warriors — men, women, old and
young — who struggle for the people.*

A JOURNAL FOR NATIVE AND NATURAL PEOPLES

AKWESASNE NOTES is the official publication of the Mohawk Nation at Akwesasne.

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HOW IT IS WITH US

This column is always difficult to compose. On the one hand, it should be upbeat and inspiring, but on the other it should be candid. The realities are there is usually some good news and some bad news on our front. So, first the good news.

After years of effort we have finally made contact with our colleagues in the commercial press. We have been told that AP may run an 800 word feature on *Akwesasne Notes* in April. The material on Dennis Banks made front-page news in central New York and we met some of the newspaper people as a result.

The article about Guatemalan Indian refugees and the deportation effort by I.N.S. was produced when Managing Editor Jose Barreiro and Mr. Raymond Cook went to Florida to cover the story. The effort produced an article in the *New York Times* which appeared on March 11 entitled "Eight of Guatemala's Indians Freed By Federal Judge." The issue of Indian refugees and the U.S. policy toward them has hardly been touched in the American media. As you can see in Mr. Barreiro's article in this issue, they face almost certain death if returned to Guatemala.

The story of what is really happening to Guatemala's Indians is finally starting to break in the American press. *The New Republic* carried an article in their April 11, 1983 edition ("The Guns of Guatemala," by Allan Nairn) which reported the army's strategy there and stated that at one time perhaps as many as one million of the country's seven million people were hiding from the army which has a policy of murdering civilians in the Indian communities. Although *Akwesasne Notes* has been reporting that the massacres have not let up since the rise to power of Gen. Montt, the American press has been slow to follow the story. That seems to be changing.

The bad news is that Mr. Barreiro has resigned as Managing Editor. He has held that position for most of the past six years, and much of the organization of the newspaper has been his responsibility. Most of the early coverage of the Central American wars and their effects on the Indian populations there came from his pen, as well as much of the reporting of chemical and radioactive contamination on Native lands. During this time he has also added much to the growth of this community. He helped the Akwesasne Emergency Team procure their first ambulance and the training for its personnel. He taught at and helped raise money for the Akwesasne Freedom School and he organized and managed the Emergency Response International Network. And, of course, he has written many other articles and helped with a considerable amount of outreach and fundraising for *Akwesasne Notes*. Those of us familiar with his work are not anxious to see him leave, although we expect to continue to publish his articles in the future.

Akwesasne Notes has been many things to many people. To some, it is a news magazine which covers Native issues. To others, it is a magazine which inspires and focuses action on political and cultural levels. We have tried to forge new paths in the realm of Native journalism. Sometimes we have been successful, and sometimes we have failed. But always we have been significant.

Native journalism has yet to come of age. Most Native newspapers aren't part of the legitimate world of journalism because they do not fulfill the role communications organizations must fill if they are to be effective.

A journalist is a peculiar type of professional. On Monday morning he can receive an assignment to write about dolphins. Although he may have never even met a dolphin, he knows he must go out into the world, find an expert on dolphins, and ask him everything anyone might want to know about the subject. Then he has to read whatever he can find that is in print. By mid-afternoon, he is himself beginning to be an expert on dolphins.

Magazine journalists, in my humble opinion, must do something more than simply report the facts. They need to interpret to the reader why the facts about dolphins are something their readers should care about. Why is it significant that dolphins may be intelligent enough to acquire what humans call language? What are the relationships between humans and dolphins? Is there any mystery, are there any interesting sidelights to the story? If anything is unusual, can the information be verified from another source or with a degree of scientific certainty?

Native journalists generally aren't doing that kind of thing. Native peoples are under enormous pressures everywhere — in the far north, on the Pacific Coast, in the Southwest. Despite the threats to peoples' lives, to their water supply or to their land base, you see relatively little hard reporting in the Native press. The reason is that almost all the Native press is controlled by political organizations — the tribal councils. By "controlled" I don't mean that someone comes in and black pencils copy before it goes to the printers, but there is a universal kind of censorship which takes place. If an editor writes something the Tribal Chairman doesn't like, he *knows* he will be fired before the ink is dry. Although freedom of the press is a myth in America, it is a concept which has practically no existence in Indian Country.

Little wonder that the Native press has such weak credentials. While it is true that journalists have a responsibility to avoid libelous use of the press, I think it is possible to state that Native journalists are more likely to be fired for telling the truth than for libel. In an atmosphere like that, the Indian people are not served because there can be no discussion-critical of tribal council policy and inside the Indian communities there is no effort to develop investigative journalism.

Over the years we have tried to establish a standard of legitimate magazine journalism. As a national and international magazine, we are not trying to report the illegitimate actions of Indian governments, but we have done so from time to time when the conditions warranted. We have criticized U.S. and Canadian Indian and environmental policies extensively, and the same can be said for the policies of other governments, most notably Guatemala and Nicaragua.

We like to think we have staked out for discussion some specific areas which other magazines are silent about. The first of these areas has been racism. In a racist society, everyone is racist, and racism is a hot issue in Indian Country. There is the racism directed against the Indians by the whites, and that directed by Indians against whites and

against other Indians. Not many people, Indian or white, want to discuss it or admit it or deal with it. In that respect many of our readers understand our commitment to confronting racism as an ideology. We publish articles which are not specifically about Indians because we want our readership to deal with Native peoples as human beings capable of thought and ideas about contemporary reality whether those thoughts are romantic or have Indian color or not.

A second area we have addressed involves the need to develop a spirituality and, really, a new definition of spiritualism. Although we address the topic from an American Indian perspective, we have become increasingly conscious about avoiding a romanticization of the issue. Thirdly, we are dedicated to the idea of cultural pluralism and its practice in modern societies. We believe that cultural pluralism requires that peoples' rights to land and culture must be respected in law and in the attitudes of other people, and thus we have published extensively on the subject of the need for laws and policies which recognize the Native peoples' rights to land and culture and so forth.

Among other things, we believe that the modern world is heading toward a crisis and that alternatives must be found around which people can organize to regain control over their lives. We don't mean that we want to see Indian people create heavily centralized and hierarchical governments based on European models of economic production. Quite the opposite. We believe that the models for economic organization are found in the lifeways of preliterate peoples who are decentralized and pluralistic and who abhor large-scale hierarchies.

Representing all these (and more) principles and ideas is extremely difficult and occasionally hazardous. We are almost always out of sync with the realities of the Indian communities. When we first began talking about the need for self-sufficiency as an objective of Indian communities, the Indian communities had not yet begun to think along those lines. Today that has changed, but we are still representing ideas which have not yet found root in the Indian communities and which will, we think, appear there in the future.

People can support cultural pluralism, for example, when it means that *they* are to be left alone and even given support to develop *their* own way of life. When you have practically nothing to start with, it's pretty hard to see that somewhere down the road you will need to reciprocate and support *other* peoples' desire for control over their own lives. It is hard to develop an ethic of world citizenship when you have never had any control over your own life, and contradictions are certain to arise.

We at *Akwesasne Notes* are journalists. The words which come to you in these pages represent the efforts of real humans to engage issues of universal importance. We feel we have opened Native journalism to some new issues in a small way, and that there is an enormous amount of work which still needs to be done. Over the years we have received tremendous support from our readers in this effort. We hope it may always be so.

John Mohawk

A CALL FOR HELP

TO ALL NATIVE NORTH AMERICAN NATIONS

A Report On THE FORCED MIGRATION OF MAYAN PEOPLES:

Editors' note: Many Mayan people, victims of the brutal war being waged against them in their homelands, are migrating north. They are fleeing for their lives and seeking refuge and sanctuary.

After nearly three years of a near-complete news blackout, even the largely-uninformed North American news media is reporting regularly on these events. The following is a report on one case, already pending before U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (I.N.S.) Court. It is the story of one family's flight from terror, from massacres, rape, torture.

The NOTES obtained this report from a documentation team of Indigenous Peoples' Network (I.P.N.), to whom we are thankful. I.P.N. is a Native Peoples' news service currently in formation.

"WE WERE JUST HAPPY, WITH OUR TREES, OUR CROPS. THEN, SOME STRANGE MEN CAME TO OUR MOUNTAINS. THEN, THE ARMY CAME, AND THEY STARTED KILLING PEOPLE, THEY MADE MASSACRES IN THE VILLAGES...WE DECIDED TO GO."

— from the testimony of sixteen year old Kanjobal woman, at the Krome Avenue processing Center, Miami, Fla.



PHOTO CREDIT: J. Loonis

Kanjobal Refugees in Southern Florida

In Southern Florida, there are at present approximately 250 Kanjobal Indians from Guatemala. They represent several inter-related families from the San Miguel Acatan area of the Department of Huehuetenango and are people who migrated from their homelands as a result of the all-pervasive state of violence and war which dominates the region.

These 250 people are part of a larger pattern of migration involving hundreds of thousands of internal and external refugees from the Guatemalan highlands, where the majority of the population is Mayan Indians. They represent particularly large migrations from the Kanjobal, Mam, Jacalteco, Quiche, Kakchiquel and Kekchi Nations of the Guatemalan countryside.

Many of the Guatemalan Indians have settled in refugee camps on the Mexican side of the Guatemalan-Mexican border, an 800 mile long frontier. Others, having lost their villages to the torch and endured massacres, torture and death threats, have settled in more or less permanent camps around the larger cities of Guatemala, particularly around the capital, Guatemala City. It is estimated that just from the Kanjobal Nation, with a total population of 30,000 people, some 3,000 refugees have made their way to United States jurisdiction.

The approximately 250 Kanjobals in Southern Florida are presently working and residing at or near agricultural migrant labor camps, having been incorporated into the North American migrant stream along with United States-Mexico border. One group of some 50 people are residing and working in the vicinity of Indiantown, Florida. The rest are to be found in one of three camps in the area of the towns of Immokalee and Fort Myers.

United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) officials have made two raids against the Kanjobal group at the Indiantown site, resulting in the detention of seven people (six men, one woman) on

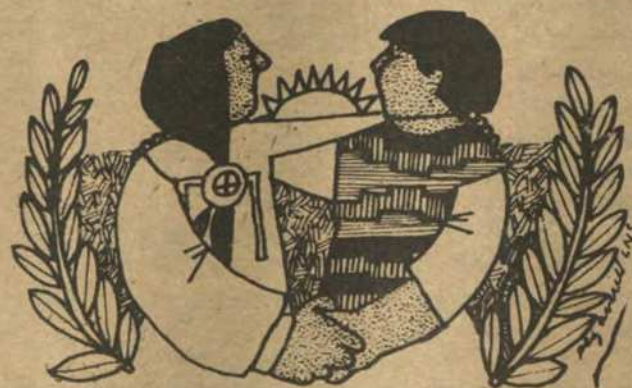
January 25th and one man on March 9, 1983. Four women and eight children were also held briefly and released during the second INS raid.

The eight detainees are currently going through deportation proceedings, and are scheduled for a deportation hearing within the month.

There is good reason to believe that these eight K'anjobal people will face torture and execution, if deported back to Guatemala. In their case, as in many others, deportation very realistically equals death.

Resolutions of support by North American Indian peoples, organizations, groups and law offices would be most appreciated.

There is a most pressing need to let the United States State Department know of the Native People's concern for our Southern relatives, of their right to seek asylum and sanctuary from repression and death, and of North American Native Peoples' right to call for and extend such sanctuary. Many peoples of the world come to North America seeking sanctuary from violent conflicts. In many cases, they are extended political asylum and/or extended voluntary deportation status by the United States and Canada. Will these same governments now be allowed to close their arms and refuse a people native to this continent the right to seek shelter from genocide?



INTERVIEWS

In early March, 1983, the IPN documentation team interviewed several of the Kanjobal people at the Krome Detention Center, in Southern Florida. The interviews, conducted in Kanjobal and translated into English, reflect the history and trajectory of this one Mayan groups' flight from Northern Guatemala. To a person, the interviewees were eye-witnesses to or had personal knowledge of numerous cases of violence perpetrated against the Native population of Huehuetenango. In most of these incidents, according to their statements, the perpetrators of the violence were Guatemalan Army patrols. However, the interviewees also detailed several executions which they say were carried out by the guerilla forces.

As the war between the Army and the guerrillas intensified, the Indian villagers came under increasing pressure to support one or the other. Antonio Juan Francisco, one of the detainees, describes their situation this way:

During 1981 the violence against the Indians by both the guerrillas and the soldiers became much more common. We heard about the massacre of the Indians at Koya. Persons would just disappear or would be found the next day murdered. In July, 1981 when my father had been working in a field by himself, he didn't come home. We found him with both his arms broken and many wounds. We are not sure who killed him, the Army or the guerrillas.

As the year passed, we heard more and more stories and guerrillas came into our village. The guerrillas came demanding to know whether we were rich or poor. We told them that we were poor because we were afraid they would do something to us if they thought we were against them. I also grew afraid that the Army would come into my village, burn my house and kill my family. There were an increasing number of guerrillas in my village, and I thought that the Army would attack, just as it had done in Koya. It became difficult to do much of anything in San Carlos. When we took our coffee to market, we did not go down the highway. Instead, we travelled through the jungle. We did this after being stopped on the highway time after time by the guerrillas and the Army. Many times they forced us to give them part or all of the food we had grown. Sometimes the guerrillas would put flags along the highway in the night time to prove that they controlled the highways. When they did this, we had to leave the road. If the Army came along, they would order the Indians to remove the flags. If you removed the flags, the guerrillas would come along at night and retaliate against you for collaborating with the Army. This happened to families I knew in San Carlos. Houses were burned and people were killed because they helped the government. On the other hand, if you did not remove the flags, the government would think you were with the guerrillas and they would come after you.

It took two or three times as long to carry coffee through the jungle to the market than over the highway.

The interviewees detailed many incidents of violent deaths, rape and torture. Much of the violence appeared to be conducted randomly, almost whimsically, by the government troops. Also, very often, people were killed without any explanation whatsoever and thus the fear and apprehension of further violence was augmented.

According to the interviewees, the situation became such that almost daily they would hear of or actually witness some violent incident. There was an atmosphere of terror being generated. Two eyewitness accounts are particularly telling.

Alonso Francisco:

In 1981 there was a massacre of 47 people in my area. One of my sons came to warn me about the killings that were going on and to tell me to hide out. I did that, even though I had no clothing, nor even a shirt. And I went to hide. I only had on a pull-over shirt and I went to hide in the bush. While I was hiding

"Now the people have a well-founded fear that wherever the government soldiers go, there are deaths. Every time they go into a village, someone dies. They have done so in every village where they have gone, found someone to kill."

in the bush I was witness to the killing of eleven people near my home about 10 cuerdas from my house. This happened at the village of La Chula. Two days later we came out of hiding. At that time we were able to take up the dead and bury them. It was then that we were able to count 47 dead. Most of them were buried in common graves. The way the people were killed was--some were run through with sharp sticks, others were clubbed to death and still others were shot to death. Others had bits of cloth stuffed in their mouths to quiet them and possibly choke them to death. The way the Army came into our village was they separated people. First they placed them at the school, and from there they separated the men out to be killed, bringing them out to be killed. Among the people they killed in the village were Lopez Francisco, Francisco Lopez and Fafael Pascual. They were my neighbors, the ones I took care of burying. The men I am talking about also came from the village of Caxnajib. This is in the municipality of San Miguel/Independencia, in Huehuetenango. This actually occurred on the 27th of October, 1981. These deaths of my neighbors made me very sad and also very scared."

Pascual Tomas Aguirre was an eyewitness to several massacres and killings that occurred at the villages of Coya, Suntutaj and Chimbam.

The massacre at Coya, July 19, 1982, is well-documented and accounts of it have appeared in the North American press.

Aguirre:

Those people at Coya were massacred by soldiers. They were massacred by the very same soldiers who had attempted to organize us into the civil patrols. When they arrived at Coya there were four trucks full of soldiers. Those four trucks came in at one edge of the village. At the other end of the village, on the Jacaltenango side, there were 40 soldiers also that came in.

On that day also there were two helicopters and one small plane utilized on the attack on Coya. They were utilized to shoot people from the air. The fleeing. The plane dropped bullets from the tail end of it. It appeared almost like it was raining bullets. All this I could see with my own eyes while hiding out from the area near my village. I was hiding in a special place. The very next day I went into that village. The soldiers had left and we could see all the dead people. Another group of men arrived in the afternoon and we all buried the dead people right there in the town square. The reason I was on my way to Coya was I was going there for the market. I saw about 50 bodies. Another thing that scared me was that after the killings the soldiers went house to house and they violated many women. For about a month there was Army activity in the surrounding villages. For that reason many men went to hide out in the village of Suntutaj. In the aldea of Coya, before the attack, there were about 500 people. Later, there was only maybe 200 to be found there.

Another incident that I must tell you about occurred also in Chimbam, in 1981, when they killed the spiritual leader of the town and his assistants. They came in the downstairs of the school. The soldiers came in that day from the village of Chuj. They went directly to his place and took him out. They took him, the Alcal-cha, out to a place where there are a lot of rocks.



There they killed him, they beat him, they shot him to death. This happened at 10 a.m. on the morning of Friday. I saw this when I went to that village for the Sunday market. On Sunday, he was still there. The body was still there, nobody had buried him. And I could see him there, all bloody. He was stoned and clubbed, as well as shot, killed that way. Some of the other people were bludgeoned to death with clubs, some of them cut into pieces with machete blows. The people would not go near the bodies because the Army was still around and they were afraid that they would be seen near the bodies. Finally, when the people felt safe enough to go near the bodies, they had to take them up piece by piece since they were cut up, some of them very badly, and had already been eaten partially by wild dogs and other animals. They had to put them in boxes, piece by piece, so they could bury them. Now the people have a well-founded fear that wherever the government soldiers go, there are deaths. Every time they go into a village, someone dies. They have done so in every village where they have gone, found someone to kill. Everywhere the soldiers go the people are certain now someone is bound to die."

It was massacres such as those described above, and several others, which, the interviewees say, caused them to leave their country. Several indicated that prior to abandoning their farms, they had never even heard of the United States. To a person, they also indicated their complete dismay at their situation as migrants, and emphasized their attempts, prior to leaving, to isolate themselves from the conflict between the Army and the guerrillas.

A dramatic change occurred in the Army's Counterinsurgency policy as a result of the Rios Montt coup, however--the forced recruitment of village men into the "Civil Patrols." This new policy destroyed their last hopes of maintaining themselves outside of the violent conflict.

"Now, about the Civil Patrols," says one interviewee, Felix Francisco.

"The Army came in the village, chose a man to be a comandante. This man then picked a group, also from the village men. The comandante organized the groups as day and night groups. Instead of guns they were given sticks, and told to attack the guerrillas if they show up in our village. The guerrillas, about a hundred of them, came one time to talk to us. They shot up the school where the Civil Patrol group held up. All the Civil Patrol people in the school jumped to the floor and no one was hurt. The guerrillas came from the direction of San Andres and because of this the people of the Civil Patrol are very scared. But if we don't join the Civil Patrol the Army kills us as guerrillas too. In San Miguel the Army killed people that wondered about not joining the Civil Patrol.

Pascual Tomas Aguirre had a similar experience:

(Translation note: the interviewees use the Kanjobal word for owner, or owners, repeatedly in their testimony. Later they define this term to be synonymous, for them, as the Army or the Army people.)

"In the village of Yala, where I am from, the owners (the Army) organized a civil patrol. They named a man as it's commander. His name was Juan de Juan. This man began to organize the civil patrols for the Army and his first job was to make a list of men. My name was placed on that list by him. He organized us into groups of 50. Every three days we were asked, and he would take us deep into the mountains armed only with sticks. Our mission was then to hunt guerrillas. The way the civilian patrol works was by force. If we refused to join or go along with it, then there was a threat and the possibility of being burned alive, or being killed in some way. I repeat again that we were organiz-



PHOTO CREDIT: Francis Wardle

ed into groups of 50, or so, men, and made to go out into the hills to look for the guerillas. Sometimes we would be gone for two nights looking for guerillas. For these excursions we needed to bring our own food and supplies. Myself, I did not like to be put in this position. I didn't like this situation, so I decided that I wanted to leave, and I left. The supplies of food that we were requested to bring along were to last us for nine meals. This created a problem for us, because by going out on these patrols, we lost much time from our work in the fields, we had to utilize our food supply, and in any case, it was a situation of us out in the mountains, hunting for armed guerillas only with sticks, while the Army stayed in town and did not risk themselves to go out hunting for the guerillas."

In small groups, at first, and then by large numbers, the migration north of these Mayan peoples has gained international attention. It is a situation of the most profound and tragic proportions. Dozens of thousands of them now find themselves in foreign lands at the mercy so often contradictory and hostile immigration policies, separated from relatives and fearful of returning to their homes.

Pascual Tomas Aguirre:

"I have also received warning messages that my family has been threatened with having their house burned to the ground because of my departure. The reason that my house was saved from being burned was that my brother took my place in the civil patrol. Now, of course, we have to take care of his expenses that he incurred by taking my place.

In my own village there were very few people left after the violence, only old men and maybe old women, some young kids, almost everyone left. I know of people from my village who ended up in Los Angeles. I know people there. I also know people in parts of Mexico, Tapachula and other places, but very few people are left behind now.

After all these things happened I too decided I would leave. We went, six of us, from my village to Tapachula, Mexico. There we worked at the coffee and cotton farms making some money. Some of this money we used to send back home to help the people there. After four months, I decided to come north to the United States where I came in January of this year. We came up by train through Mexico, and we entered the U.S. through Aqua Prieta in the Mexican state of Sonora. Some of our people had come ahead already into the U.S. and had gotten to know the ways of getting inside the U.S., and they helped us to come across and they gave us what we needed to know to arrive at Indiantown, Florida."

The eight Kanjobal people who had been detained, were released at a bond reduction hearing held on March 9, at the Krome Ave. Detention Center. The hearing was held before Federal Immigration Judge Sidney B. Majure.

No date has been set for the next step in their case, which will be a deportation hearing, although it is expected to occur with a few weeks.

The eight detainees were represented by George Carr, a Florida Rural Legal Services lawyer, and Bartolome Colom, an American Friends Service Committee paralegal. At the hearing held on March 9, there was also a Monsignor carrying a letter from the Archbishop of the Catholic church in South Florida; a representative of one of the Seminole Indian Reservations; and several interested media people, including a New York Times reporter.

The INS in Southern Florida is a very active agency. It is facing dozens of thousands of cases of undocumented people from many parts of the world, particularly from Central America and the Caribbean. Southern Florida is also an agricultural region requiring a constant influx of migrant workers to care for and harvest huge fields of citrus fruits, sugarcane, and other crops.

INS (known as "La Migra" to most migrant people) focuses many of its raids on the camps where the migrant workers live and publicly sustains a policy aimed at obtaining the highest number of detentions and deportations possible. The Southern Florida INS regional head is Mr. Joseph Howardson, formerly stationed in California, where he became controversial over his enforcement of "Operation Jobs". The rationale of "Operation Jobs" is that a hyper-active INS deportation procedure will create more jobs for unemployed U.S. citizens.

Many of the large Southern Florida growers are lobbying before INS to obtain more access to an INS program called the H-2 program. The H-2 program, a worker-importation process, works on a contract-basis with foreign countries, principally Jamaica and Mexico. It provides an abundant, inexpensive and non-unionized labor force for agricultural enterprises. The rationale of the large growers in lobbying for an expanded H-2 program is that there are not enough legal agricultural workers in their region. INS raids and deportation activity is generally seen by the growers as supportive of their claim of there not being enough legal workers. Thus, generally growers are openly supportive of INS personnel.

During the time of detention, the Kanjobal people were subjected to a procedure of dubious legality which deserves further investigation. On February 3rd, 1983 nine days after their arrest and while already being represented by an immigration attorney, the Kanjobal detainees were transported from the Krome Ave.

Detention Center to the Guatemalan consulate in Miami. Mr. Pottman, the Krome Deportation chief, is alleged to have arranged this visit and conducted the detainees to the consulate in an INS van. At no time were the detainees informed of their destination nor were they allowed to confer with their legal representatives.

Pascual Tomas Aguirre, one of the detainees, provides the following account of this incident:

"Now we come to another part of my statement, and that has to do with the day and the incident of the first seven people under detention when they were taken to the Guatemalan Consulate, one morning shortly after our arrest. The head man here gave orders that we were to be taken to the Guatemalan Consulate. When we arrived at the consulate, we were taken inside and we were there interrogated by two men and two women from the consulate. The people from the immigration center that accompanied us to the consulate at this time were asked to go outside because now we were in Guatemalan territory, and so we stayed only with the personnel from the consulate. They asked us our names and they also kept asking us how many of us there were here in Florida. We did not answer anything. As they asked these questions and could not get any response from us, they then called in a woman also from the consulate who was apparently from the town of Chauntla which is also in the department of Huehuetenango. The main part of the group then was kept in the consul's office and this woman would take us, one by one, into another room to continue to interrogate us. Before the actual questioning by this woman, the consul had spoken to us. He seemed by angry with us, he said: Now you think you are in a very rich country, but they don't want you here, they want to send you out of here. For that reason, the consul said, we need to fix up your documents here so that you can be returned to our country. We were at the consulate for about two hours without having given any information. Then a man came who appeared to be a tourist from Guatemala in U.S. A man from Quetzaltenango. They asked him to interview us also. He was there with his wife and a daughter. The kinds of questions he asked us were: how did you get here? How did you end up in this place? How did they arrest you? He said to us: what are your names? I need to know your names because, I want to be able to help you. Because if you can say your name and if you say where you are from, then they will give you a passport or some papers like this one, where at this point the man, who we think is a tourist, presented his document to us. The only response that we had for him was just to look at his face and we never uttered a word. Then he asked me if I had any money, which I also did not answer. Then he said if you tell me your name, in any case, I will accompany you back to Guatemala. He said: don't be afraid of me, I am also from Guatemala, from Quetzaltenango, we are of the same people. The only thing that I am doing here is that I came here as a tourist. The opinion that I have of that man is that he was a Ladino, because he looks just like the Ladinos look in Guatemala. So in any case, they were not able to get anything out of us.

The Kanjobal's legal representatives, Mr. Bartolome Colom and Mr. George Carr, called this incident an "illegal procedure," and obviously intended to secure a quick deportation back to Guatemala. The fact that the Kanjobals refused to give even their names probably saved them from deportation. Considering that the Kanjobal detainees' entire political asylum case before INS, rests on evidence that their lives are threatened by the Guatemalan government security forces, it is almost incomprehensible that INS officials would have turned them over to Guatemalan jurisdiction. The lawyers are considering further legal action on this incident.

Letters and resolutions of support and inquiry should be addressed to:

**Indian Law Resource Center
601 E. St. SE
Washington, DC 20003**

GUATEMALA

Patterns Of Terror



(The following is a paper which was written a year ago and circulated in the U.S. It is an anonymous document with an interesting analysis of the situation in Guatemala.)



When the seventy year old Mayan grandmother barred her door from Guatemalan soldiers demanding access, they threw a hand grenade in after her. When soldiers attempted to recruit men from military service in a remote Indian village, they were stoned by the women, and proceeded to massacre men, women and children.

During the first of three visits in 1981 by the author such stories were rare enough not to mar the beauty and serenity of Guatemala and its colorful people. By December 1981 the situation had deteriorated, the stories too frequent to be overlooked. The author, a technical consultant with eleven years experience in fifteen less developed countries (LDC's), has an essentially non-political point of view but the disturbing picture coming into focus in Guatemala demanded further attention. The only reason this report was attempted by one not versed in politics is that the information has not appeared elsewhere. It is hoped that the slant on technology and its effects will be refreshing to the reader.

Why, for instance, was the Guatemalan army and the semi-official right wing paramilitary bent on killing what appeared to be peaceful, non-aligned Indians rather than concentrating on fighting the professed communist guerillas, the EGP (Ejercito Guerrillero de los Pobres)? Was it true that 50-100 Indians were being killed daily, and if so, why wasn't there an international outcry? Why were UN peace-keeping forces not brought in, or at least a UN sponsored investigation launched? As well, peaceful ethnic populations in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Bolivia are being drawn into war-like situations not of their making and of no ideological interest to them. Why? Is there any relationship between this situation and increasing unrest in Arab countries, where a conflict between traditional and modern lifestyles seems to be emerging?

The following picture of the situation in Guatemala is pieced together from discussions, radio reports and first-hand observation. Stories recounted by acquaintances could often not be verified but when the same information is repeated by several people of differing beliefs and backgrounds one comes to believe at least the gist of it. Some barbarisms and torturing are unfit to print and one would hope they are exaggerations. While the political analysis may appear spotty or naive in places, the underlying patterns emerging in Guatemala are noteworthy.

Five informants, all professional and well-educated men, privately discussed the situation at length. Three are of Spanish or mixed descent. One Englishman has been in Guatemala for several years as a technician for a private voluntary organization. A middle-aged American priest, having worked in all of Central America for over ten years, claims to be very well informed on activities in the central highlands. Two of the Guatemalans are involved in social work and consider themselves politically moderate. The third is ultra conservative with a successful career in public visual media.

Much of this report is being written in Guatemala City. Here in December the tone is glum, apprehensive, while merchants and shoppers make an attempt at Christmas cheer. The spectre of violence has greatly increased since January and June '81. Soldiers, their guns at the ready rather than slung, are stationed at strategic points around the city, surrounding banks, high rises, diplomatic quarters and traffic bottlenecks. Trucks and jeeps loaded with soldiers and material pass by on sombre missions. Bomb damage is visible in various parts of town. Gas stations and busses have been gutted by fire. A twelve-story skyscraper of a style more suitable to Manhattan has most of its glass blown out, its aluminium siding twisted, from a guerilla bomb of a tonnage too huge to be home-made.

Intolerably gory war tales abound. Even the official newspaper "La Prensa Libre" describes dozens of murders almost daily. Perpetrators are usually the ubiquitous "desconocidos" (unknowns). The conservative informant is quite annoyed that the paper publicizes the deaths. "Why should they hang out our dirty laundry?"

One story told has two Indians in a remote village hunting ducks. They fire as a military truck with soldiers happens by. Suspecting attack, the soldiers proceed to kill men, women and children in the village. National Public Radio (NPR) (Dec. 28, '81) recounts an army strategy to flush out guerilla sympathizers: disguised as guerillas, soldiers visit a village or ranch and ask for food. If granted hospitality they return the next day in uniform and kill the host.

In one community on the shores of Lake Atitlan, some villagers talked back to soldiers. Days later a helicopter dropped in and led twenty men aside to their deaths. The army recruits soldiers from the countryside at gunpoint. Resisters are apparently shot on the spot, complete with their families and farm animals.

For a variety of reasons which will be discussed the Indians in certain regions are being moved off their land to settle in nearby towns. Here too, resisters are dealt with in the same way. The International Red Cross headquarters in Washington D.C., aware of the situation but pledged by their constitution not to publicize it, claims that very few political prisoners are being taken. Bullets are cheaper.

All five informants agree on the following points: the daily death toll is up between 50 and 100 (the rightist quickly mentioned that the figure of 100 was unproven); the internal struggle has been inflamed out of proportion by superpower intervention; and they all wished that Guatemala could find peace on its own rather than escalating the situation to a superpower struggle. All agree that the Guatemalan army and para-military were involved in massive civilian killings but their reasons differed. The conservative believes the government was attempting to route out "subversives", trouble makers, communist terrorists and regressive elements. NPR (Dec. 28) quoted a high ranking conservative military official: "We are fighting a dirty war here in Guatemala."

The moderates feel that wealthy, influential Guatemalans and foreign interests find the Indians undesirable for the following reasons:

Although 150 families are said to own 80% of the valuable land, these powers are looking for expansion into the traditionally Indian altiplano; large quantities of oil have been found in the primarily Indian area around Huehuetenango; and some of the wealthier Guatemalans, following the example of the American leisure class, are looking for altiplano property to build summer cottages.

Since Indian cane cutters staged a successful strike three years ago, they are considered threatening to the stability of the economy. The government wants control over its Indian population, and one way is to move them off the land and into the towns. On their "minifundios", or farms, the Indians are more likely to cooperate with transient guerillas. The very peacefulness and contentment of the Indians, historically an advantage because enterprises could avail themselves of essentially free and uncomplaining labour, may now be a disadvantage because contentment does not lead to progress. The shift coincides with a change from plantation mentality to industrialization. As a Swiss plantation owner told a Peace Corps volunteer already ten years ago, "If Guatemala is to industrialize it must get rid of its Indians."



One Guatemalan believed that the army is trying to instigate an Indian uprising so they would have a (U.S. supported) excuse to eradicate them. After all, a look at U.S. history shows that (a) we all but exterminated the Red Indian and (b) we "developed successfully." This cynical view is too black and white, however. Many government officials are sincere in their desire to maintain peace and improve the lot of the Indians. It is sad that this desire too often means changing them rather than offering peace, justice and equality.



"The present war in Guatemala is not likely to endanger the genetic stock of Mayan Indians. What is primarily endangered is the peaceful, balanced and independent lifestyle of the true Indian. They now seek refuge from the terror in the cities and in Spanish dress."

Among their countrymen, Indians are known to be peaceful, happy people with a centuries-old lifestyle in tune with their environment. Their children hardly ever fight, cry or complain and early on fit into a family life of mutual cooperation. Anthropological research confirms this. One explanation is the integrated nature of their lifestyle. The extended family is of central importance and there is far less fragmentation of daily roles than in western cultures. The whole family helps make a living, which is also their entertainment, education, religion, tradition and care for the children and the elderly. Without succumbing to the western tendency to glamorize the "noble savage," there is much in the thrifty precision of their lives, like a species keyed into its ecological niche, that we can benefit from in balancing our own lifestyles. The Indians are essentially unaffected by the host of tension-related illnesses that plague the western world such as ulcers, heart-attacks, high blood pressure, constipation and migraine headaches. There is virtually no crime amongst the altiplano Indians.

Many stable ethnic cultures and biological species around the world are being overrun by this restless, expansive culture of ours. We may be wise not to conclude that this is proof of a superior culture, for like a cancer, it may simply be growing out of control.

The Quiche Region of the altiplano is considered the seat of Indian resistance. A tourist brochure notes Quiche to be 97% Indian. In the last year massacres by the army have taken hundreds, and some claim thousands, of lives. The "Prensa Libre" newspaper states that the Quiche Indians are trying to declare independence. Whether this is true or not, it fuels and justifies the slaughter.

Since the present regime in Guatemala is synonymous with the military, in giving military aid the U.S. is supporting the dictatorship directly. Many military officials have a translucent guise of civilship about them. For instance, both the mayor of Guatemala City and the head of the Ministry of Education are colonels. According to UN findings (NPR Feb. 15, '82) 800 people have disappeared during the unrest in Guatemala. Unofficially the number is in the thousands, since relatives are afraid of retaliation if they announce a missing person. 50 deaths a day adds up to over 18,000 annually. Religious groups have been badly intimidated by government hit squads. A number have pulled out of the country because of danger to their lives and mounting human rights violations. The official Voice of America (VOA) (Feb. 17 '82) number of deaths among the religious community since 1960 reached fifteen when American James A. Miller recently lost his life in Huehuetenango. The author, however, heard of nine religious deaths just in 1981. The highly responsible American Friends Service also place the figures above the official. According to VOA (Feb 17 '82) 400 religious members recently signed a petition accusing President Reagan of violating the trust of the American people by supporting the violence in Guatemala. "La Prensa Libre" denounces "subversive" religious groups in general. Hit squads have also decimated the liberal and academic community. Two years

ago at the University of San Carlos a majority of faculty voted for a freer curriculum. 80% of those who voted for the change have either been killed or have vanished.

In a subtle psychological coup, the National Police has staged a two year literacy campaign that they claim has reached 14,000 people. Not only could the campaign be used for political information gathering and propaganda distribution, but the police involved in teaching (who themselves usually had no more than a third grade education) could become paternalistic about their superior skill and righteous in their condemnation of the illiterate Indians. It is said that a higher crime rate exists among the illiterate than the literate. This is surely false on a national scale, although it may hold true in the cities. Nor does it mention that the crime rate in general is higher in the cities where both literacy and Spanish heritage, not to mention wealth, are higher.

When UN Ambassador Kirkpatrick was recently asked (NPR Feb 15) why the U.S. was supporting so many dictatorships around the world, she replied that there just are not that many democracies to support and dictatorships are safer than communism. She failed to mention that the U.S. has been creating dictatorships. According to Ed. Abner or Asner (NPR Feb 15), in 1964 only 11% of Latin American population lived under a dictatorship, but the figure now stands at an alarming 56%. While surveying the Latin dictatorships, Elliot Abrams, head of the U.S. government Human Rights Department, noted that Guatemala is the most repressive of all.

How much is the Guatemalan government itself influenced by the U.S.? Plenty, judging by a brief look at Guatemalan history. Military rule has been the norm. During Truman's administration there was a brief period of social reform under socialistic President Arevalo. Following Arevalo came Arbenz, a publicly elected president who initiated a program of public land distribution to the poor, recognizing that the Indians often had less than

subsistence farmland. Dulles accused Arbenz of being a communist. The paranoia led the Eisenhower administration to launch an invasion with air support on the Chiquimula region of Guatemala, from Honduras. Arbenz fled and Washington ushered in a dictator. Since the CIA instigated coup in 1954 militarist oppression has virtually wiped out political moderates.

What are we protecting? U.S. interests have a quarter of a billion dollars investment in Guatemala. If trade between the countries is considered, the economic links are much greater. Trade centers around fruit, coffee, sugar and cotton from Guatemala and industrial goods from the U.S. The U.S. has much interest and investment in recently discovered oil. It is suspicious but not surprising that the Guatemalan quetzal and the dollar are at par, and fluctuate equally.

The present war in Guatemala is not likely to endanger the genetic stock of Mayan Indians. What is primarily endangered is the peaceful, balanced and independent lifestyle of the true Indian. They now seek refuge from the terror in the cities and in Spanish dress. Throughout Guatemala City various stages of this transition can be observed, from the country Indian in his colorful embroidery to the drab city greys and forlorn faces that many come to wear. This may be the only route open to the survival of the Indian, but a demise of the traditional Indian, like the extinction of a rare and delicate orchid that can never bloom in an urban environment, would be a great loss to Guatemala and the world.

Both Nicaragua and Iran broke away from repressive, exploitative dictatorships that were supported by the U.S. and were industrially progressive for their regions. Both are now antagonistic to the U.S. and are leaning towards, or embracing, the Left. Many other countries in Latin America and the Arab world are seething on the same brink. Why don't U.S. policy makers see this simple, self-defeating equation? Reagan's conservative outlook is especially accelerating the trend toward social upheaval in many of these countries, which see the de-emphasis on human rights as an invitation to atrocities.

In many societies around the world attempts at industrialization lead to increased frustration because they are not culturally set up to accept sweeping change. Even the concept of progress, with its implications of acceleration and expansion, is alien to many cultures.

Development causes frustration for many reasons. There is often heavy social pressure to develop, either from incoming cultures or progressive segments of the local society. These pressures result in psychological changes that are unprecedented and hard to manage. Similar changes in world outlook took the industrialized cultures centuries of social and intellectual evolution to achieve. If industrial cultures are going through future shock, how much more disorienting must it be when coupled with the culture shock of an imported lifestyle?

This culture-future shock manifests itself in the dichotomy between city and country. When looked at purely objectively, a city is a rather curious



phenomenon, since it depends totally on the countryside for its subsistence. At best, a city is in symbiotic relationship to the countryside. More often, in our post-colonial era, the cities manipulate and exploit the human and natural resources of the country.

During colonial times, a world wide network of exploitation was set up, and has been maintained as "trade routes" in more recent times. Food and raw materials generally flow towards the industrial world centers from farms or mines through village, town and city to capital; new lifestyles, foreign ideas and industrial products flow the other way. Middlemen profit by keeping the flow moving. Since the world centers and their representatives down the line have the power, economically and politically, they can control the prices and keep the poor poor. Economics is one reason that cooperative dictatorships are favored over more egalitarian governments.

Until industrialization made world trade and communication possible, local towns and cities were much closer culturally to their rural populations than they are now. Since change was slow, towns and villages were never more than a few years behind, at least knowing what was happening in the cities. Local cities were the center of the world, psychologically, for the rural population. If the mental shift to world perspective is pushed too rapidly, it results in mounting tension.

Nowadays the capital cities of all less developed countries are catering in some way to the consumer lifestyle, and are importing a host of western ideas that are often locally inappropriate or shocking. These strongholds of consumer ideology are often decades and sometimes centuries closer to western standards of living than are the rural societies. (Herein the phrase "ahead of...rural societies" was purposely avoided because the returns of the industrial experiment are still not in and it is not a foregone conclusion that we are ahead. There is much disturbing evidence that industrialization is an ecologically untenable, historical fluke. It may be obsolete or radically modified in the not too distant future.)

The small peasants who formerly looked forward to visiting the city now feel afraid and ashamed of entering this alien world of multi-storied glass buildings, metals and plastics, fast-moving machines and incomprehensible laws and transactions. It is as though an alien culture had taken root on their soil.

One simple formula exists: the greater the exploitation of the countryside by the economic powers, the greater the chance of disproportionate development at the economic seats, the cities, and the more likely the kindling of disillusionment, alienation and frustration amongst the large poor populations.

The frustration mounting from all these factors develops its backlash against the alien culture, primarily the U.S. The revolt back to conservative Islam in Iran was recognized by world observers to be a reaction against too rapid a thrust into industrialization by the Shah (who fulfilled the above formula of exploitation, as did Somosa in Nicaragua). The rise of conservative Islamic extremists elsewhere can be attributed to the same pattern. By deduction, the trend is on the upswing.



A time in the marketplace.

If consciously or inadvertently, the foreign policy of industrialized countries is creating so much conflict, misery and communist reaction, the lifestyle that these policies profess to protect must be questioned. Is it more desirable or just more desire oriented? Does it serve man's needs better or have we just duped ourselves and the rest of the world into thinking it does? For instance, if energy consumed per capita is converted to manpower or "slave" power, the average American has at his service at all time 300 "slaves", (the energy required to make and maintain the house, the cars, and all the products that are consumed). An average Nepali has 3 or 4 "slaves", in the wood and candles he burns plus a few products. A Guatemalan would have maybe ten.

Energy implies movement and change. Citizens of rich nations live in environments so busy, so changed from the ones their bodies evolved to deal with that disruption is bound to occur. Nervous and psychosomatic diseases virtually unknown in the poor countries escalate in proportion to national wealth and energy consumption. Dr. Robert M.A. Hirschfeld, chief of the Depression Section of the National Institute of Mental Health, estimates one out of five Americans suffer from depression. Government statistics say 30%. That adds up to 70 million Americans! The divorce rate is shocking. The rich are clamouring for more wealth. The original belief was that wealth would bring greater security, peace of mind, but instead the wealthiest and most sheltered are also the most insecure about change. Note, for instance, how terrified the average man is of an economic slump that may cut his annual income from 25 times the world average to a figure merely 20 times more than everybody else. The American Dream, of happiness through consumption must be reevaluated, particularly if it demands repression and death of a happier people overseas to maintain itself.

A gap has widened between the developed and developing nations that has many characteristics of the familiar generation gap. Developing nations resent the paternalistic attitude of industrialized nations, but at the same time want the keys to the car.

Developed nations automatically assume that (a) the LDC's want western-style development and (b) if they can be drawn into the consumer cycle they automatically take on the ideology of, and an affection for, the West. This is, as we have seen, erroneous. Furthermore, the energy equation prevents development on western lines, for fossil fuels are dwindling.

Developing nations, like the younger generations, are looking to alternatives and to renewable energies, but without the expertise. They are rich in time but poor in money, the reverse of developed nations. As with the younger generations, LDC's have a new sense of identity and are consciously searching for roots.

Meanwhile we are witnessing in the industrialized countries a final thrashing about of obsolete ideologies. Over the decades, communism and capitalism have been reacting back and forth to the point where they have developed a rigid sameness. Both are coasting on their original vigour, dynamism or vision. There is a need for a fresh, non-aligned statement of human worth, to relieve the existing ideologies of the power and responsibility they can no longer manage creatively.

If there were a balance of economic and political power between urban and rural populations, communism would have no reason for being and would be unable to gain a foothold. If one accepts the view that by supporting dictatorships, the U.S. is directly fuelling the imbalance which creates communism, one is caught in the paradox that the extreme right wing governments, such as the Reagan Republicans, are playing directly into the hands of the hard core communists. If Moscow had planted puppets in Washington, they could not have done a better job of promoting communism in Latin America.

— Anonymous

The American Indian ----- An

Overview of the Issues

by John A. Folk-Williams



On a recent July evening, two dozen residents of Swift Bear, a small Sioux community on the western plains of South Dakota, gathered in their meeting hall, an old frame building that offered no relief from the humid air and hundred degree temperature. These Lakota Sioux people, part of the Rosebud Reservation, had come to discuss several community projects and, though not a meeting of great moment, it typified one of the most important trends in the Indian rights movement of today. For these young people had been educated off the reservation but had chosen to return to the difficult economic circumstances of Rosebud to use their skills to revitalize the Swift Bear community.

A young man with long black hair, dressed simply in denim, opened the meeting with prayers in the native Lakota language and used that tongue throughout, except for translations to aid the non-Indian guests. Leaning his arms on a makeshift podium and choosing his words carefully, he spoke of his people's determination to use small scale technologies to help the community produce its own food and fuel, of the community garden they had already planted, the solar greenhouse and new meeting hall they would construct, and the means for providing firewood to all the homes. Those projects were only the beginning, he said, in their efforts to make such reservation communities thrive as they had in the days before the federal grant programs had made them economically dependent on the outside world. He spoke of the sovereignty of the Lakota Nation and the need to use their own resources to provide for themselves. And he spoke of the refusal to consider the \$105 million offer the federal government had made for its century-old taking of the Black Hills. "The Black Hills are the sacred center of the Lakota Nation, and we will not accept money in exchange for that land."

There are many Indians who would not agree with the sentiments of the small group at Swift Bear, Indians who choose to live in urban areas, who do not want to use their native language, who would gladly take a cash settlement from the federal government for the land claims. Nevertheless, the young people of Swift Bear express an attitude gaining wide acceptance in the Indian world today. Their feelings are echoed in the actions and words of Mobawks in New York,

Quinalt in Washington, Shoshones in Nevada, Navajos in New Mexico and many other Indian communities. The choice of such groups has been to maintain and sometimes revive traditional modes of life, never in pristine form, but with the adaptations required by the drastically altered circumstances of the present day. And they have chosen to press aggressively for the implementation of rights to land and governmental sovereignty that have long been neglected.

These are choices that often confuse non-Indian Americans. A Lakota leader from the neighboring Pine Ridge Reservation pinpointed the problem inadvertently during a recent talk when he said, "I saw a television program about Martin Luther King, and I couldn't help thinking as I watched the story of the black civil rights struggle that if we Indians had wanted only as much as the blacks were marching for, we would have achieved our objectives long ago."

Most Americans are confused about Indian objectives precisely because they are expressed in terms that have little to do with the familiar elements of the civil rights movement that have been widely publicized in connection with black, Hispanic and women's organizations. Indian leaders talk first not of integration, equal pay for equal work, or housing discrimination but of treaties, sovereignty, land and energy resources. The American public hears of many Sioux, like those at Swift Bear, refusing to accept federal dollars for loss of the Black Hills because the taking of money for that land would violate religious beliefs. They hear of Navajos, living in rural isolation without electricity or running water, being plunged into depression when relocated to urban homes. They hear of Indian claims to vast resources, fisheries, water, energy and land, based on treaties most Americans regard as ancient history. Even more puzzling, they hear that many Indian leaders regard the attainment of equality of citizenship not as a goal of their people but as the slogan of their enemies.

Fundamental to the unique aims of the Indians is the fact that theirs is not a movement of individuals but of peoples. Indian legal rights depend on the historical existence of Indian nations long before the formation of the United States. The legal implications of that origin give Indian tribes a status that no other group in the country possesses, and the enforcement of those group rights is the central Indian objective.

But legal doctrine would be meaningless for all native peoples without an even more basic element, the cultural survival of native community experience. The 1980 census counted approximately 1.4 million Indians in the United States, and for hundreds of thousands of them the bonds of tribal life remain a functioning cultural reality, not a remembrance of things past or a romantic affiliation with remote traditions. Those bonds are also important for the hundreds of thousands more who live in cities away from the reservations. Indian people around the country certainly suffer serious civil rights problems generated by drastic unemployment rates, often exceeding 50 percent, and social tensions caused by race discrimination, substandard health care, poor educational services and income levels that are among the lowest in the country. Despite these problems that individual Indians share with other low income and non-white populations, most Indian leaders see the key to Indian survival not so much

in civil rights legislation as in the maintenance of a land base and of the governmental power of the tribal community.

To speak of equality of citizenship, in the Indian view, means to treat Indians only as individuals by ignoring and suppressing the group rights they possess as peoples. It is to recommend, they believe, a termination of Indian government, the confiscation of tribal property rights and as a consequence, the disappearance of many of the distinctive elements of native cultures. The survival of Indians as peoples with a unique political and cultural identity is the goal of the Indian rights movement, and, while some characterize that as separatism, Indians tend to see this only as the continuation of their traditional existence. The radical step, in their view, is a political and cultural assimilation that can come about only when non-Indian America tries to coerce Indians into surrendering their rights.

— Land and Sovereignty —

Indian leaders across the country are preoccupied with land and sovereignty because they see the only secure future for Indian peoples as one based on a permanent tribal homeland regulated and governed by Indian institutions. Federal policy toward Indians has often in the past interfered with that vision, and one case from the Northwest Coast will illustrate the problems Indian leaders of today face as a result of the past federal interference.

Standing on a ridge of the Olympic Peninsula in Washington, one can look across parts of the Quinalt Reservation into the Pacific Ocean. It is a view never possible in earlier times because of the massive presence of primeval forests of red cedar trees 150 feet high that sheltered the prolific salmon streams which formed the basis of Indian life in the region. Today the view encompasses thousands of acres of absolute destruction. After decades of liquidation logging, one sees in the place of cedar forests the fallen residue of splintered logs, huge stumps, eroded slopes and scrub vegetation. As much as 200 tons of trashed wood remain on each acre, severely inhibiting the chance of natural regeneration of the forest, and closing to Indian use most of the reservation lands.



Not only has the timbered surface of this land been broken, its underlying patterns of legal ownership and jurisdiction have been splintered as well by the effect of federal policies implemented a half century ago. At the time the federal government applied to the Quinault Reservation a policy of breaking up tribal land ownership, a policy that had already been used on reservations in the Great Plains, the Northern Rockies and many other regions of the country. Based on the belief that Indians would more readily forget their traditions and assimilate non-Indian values if they became property owners, the plan called for the distribution of tribal lands to individual Indians. Often, after the Indians had received their shares of the tribal land base, "excess" acreage, beyond what federal officials felt the Indians needed, was opened to non-Indian homesteading, leading to a massive loss of Indian lands.

Though the Quinault Reservation was not opened to homesteading, a similar result was obtained when many of the Indian allottees (as recipients of the parcels of land have been known) sold them to non-Indians, often as a result of fraudulent transactions. Today, a map of Quinault Reservation shows a patchwork of ownership patterns. Out of almost 200,000 acres, the tribe itself owns only 6,000. Non-Indians, for the most part large timber companies, own more than 60,000 acres, and the rest is in the hands of individual allottees. But tribal, non-Indian and allotted lands are intermixed throughout the reservation, creating a jurisdictional maze in which non-Indians continually challenge the right of the Quinault government to extend its laws to their lands and economic activities. Further complicating the situation is the fact that allotments are no longer owned by the original allottees but by their heirs who inherited fractional interests in each parcel. With dozens of owners for many of these parcels, decisions about management of the land become almost impossible, further crippling the ability of the Quinaults either to integrate ownership more rationally or to manage land for productive use.

Today, the Quinault Nation government is fighting this legacy of federal policy in an effort to restore the productive capacity of its forests and salmon streams, to extend its jurisdiction over the entire land base, and to buy back as much of the non-Indian land as it can. Without both possession of the land and exercise of sovereignty or exclusive jurisdiction over the land, Indian nations like Quinault see their future as one of increasing disintegration of the Indian resource base as non-Indian governments and corporations intrude more and more into tribal life. This will compromise both the economic potential of Indian resources as well as the cultural basis of Indian existence. For economics, government and culture are closely interwoven in the nature of Indian rights.



"Every land claim, every treaty-protected right, every use of energy or water resources that threatens any significant non-Indian constituency raises the possibility that Congress will use its broad powers to extinguish or limit Indian claims and established property rights."



— Land in Indian Life —

While the potential economic benefits of extensive resources may be obvious, far more elusive and difficult for non-Indians to grasp is the cultural importance of land to survival of Indian peoples. Land is simply an essential part of the organic life of native spiritual beliefs and thought. As many writers have noted, Indian religions root themselves not so much in historical revelation as in specific geography. They do this in part by emphasizing the place of the native people in the purposeful and intricately designed creation where human culture is equal, not superior, to that of the other "nations" of living things, all of which are interdependent. The landscape in which the tribes live has been the site of specific historical and spiritual events that make it impossible for many Indians to think of it merely as an economic resource. That landscape has also nurtured and sustained the native peoples as long as they have respected and cared for the created world and all that it contains.

Though expressed through many different traditions, Indian peoples generally emphasized this harmonious relationship as the ideal of their cultural existence. In the flux of social and technical change which the tribes experienced both before and after European contact, this ideal was often not achieved, despite what the more romantic writers may claim, and starvation, cultural disintegration or the loss of a precious resource followed. Yet that ideal remained the guide and evaluative standard for traditional ways of life among the Indian communities.

European conceptions of property and the economic use of land to generate wealth have also permeated these same communities. It would be completely misleading to imagine any native group in the country as simply practicing ancient traditions. Each one has absorbed major changes in economic, social and intellectual habits. As a result there are segments of Indian communities committed to non-Indian values completely, others that are fully traditional, and still others that blend these value systems in a more or less easy balance. A visitor will find tribal executives in Window Rock, capital of the Navajo Nation, talking of uranium development carried out by a Navajo corporation. Yet in the communities where that development is to take place one will hear Navajos still dependent on a traditional livestock economy, barely conversant in English, denouncing uranium mining for its destruction of the sustaining earth. Almost every Indian community is beset with such conflicting attitudes about land and resources, but whether they value land for its economic potential or its spiritual and cultural significance Indian peoples are united in their determination to retain what they have and to reclaim areas they believe are rightfully theirs.

— Control of Indian Lands —

Paradoxically, in a country as economically conservative as our own, the gravest fear of the Indians is the public confiscation of their private property. Indians face that possibility as a result of legal doctrines that have given the federal government enormous power over the Indian peoples and their lands. Based on nineteenth century ideas of the inferiority of indigenous cultures to industrial civilization, the theory evolved, through a combination of Supreme Court decisions and Congressional enactments, that the United States exercised a trusteeship over the Indians and with that responsibility a broad power over Indian assets. Congress has ultimate control over the disposition of tribal property and can alter its form, substituting, for example, money for land, so long as it claims to be acting in the best interest of the Indians. Such a substitution of assets may be reasonable under American trust law, but it ignores the importance of land to Indians as the basis of their cultural survival.

The trusteeship theory has also conferred important advantages on Indians. It has secured from them protection of Indian land from state and private efforts to take it by fraud or by local law, a strong protection that has been upheld by a long line of Supreme Court decisions. But it has left the Indians almost powerless in the face of a determined effort by the Congress itself to take Indian property rights. While implementation of the trust responsibility of the federal government in a manner that truly answers Indian needs is one of the highest priorities of Indian leaders, they always remain conscious of the possibility that it can be used to their detriment, as it was so often in the era of the allotment policy.



Every land claim, every treaty-protected right, every use of energy or water resources that threatens any significant non-Indian constituency raises the possibility that Congress will use its broad powers to extinguish or limit Indian claims and established property rights. Especially vulnerable to such political threats have been the extensive land claims in Maine, Nevada and elsewhere made by Indians who were defrauded of their lands in earlier periods. Though the initial publicity surrounding these claims has emphasized the potential economic losses to non-Indians, the real meaning of them is quite different. They usually represent the effort of tribes to secure the first significant land base they have had in recent times,

"The catch is that federal interpretations of Indian rights often conflict with tribal interpretations, and federal agencies, principally the Bureau of Indian Affairs, intrude into the daily operation of tribal governments. Indian leaders want to preserve federal protection but reduce federal intervention. That is a difficult balance to strike."

and the claims often lead to negotiations for return to Indian ownership of some small part of the claimed area. But those negotiations are conducted with the knowledge that non-Indian political power might well be used to impose a Congressional settlement or extinguishment with or without Indian consent.

The Penobscot and Passamoquoddy Indians of Maine have found out how tough the bargaining can be. Through a pioneering lawsuit of the early 1970's, they won a federal court decision that pressured the federal government to bring suit on their behalf to quiet title to a major part of the state of Maine. When financial underwriters, in reaction to the threat of this lawsuit, downgraded the ratings of Maine municipal bonds, thus interfering with an important cash flow mechanism for local government, the moral and legal claims of the Indians suddenly had financial impact. Political pressure mounted in the state, and negotiations that were to last most of the decade got underway.

The settlement, passed by Congress and signed by President Carter in the fall of 1980, promises the tribes 300,000 acres of valuable timberland as well as substantial federal funds for development, but the cost was surrender of almost all of the sovereignty that Indian governments in other parts of the country have fought hard to maintain. The Indian governments are to be treated, for most purposes, on a level with municipal governments, almost as subdivisions of the state. This settlement marks the first large restoration to Indians of lands that have passed into private ownership, but because of the limitations on Indian sovereignty, this is a precedent of mixed meaning for other Indian communities.

— Sovereignty and Future Strategy —

That the resolution of a major land claim should depend less on the land itself than on sovereignty, or governmental jurisdiction over that land, is indicative of the central importance of tribal sovereignty to Indians and non-Indians alike. Indian sovereignty is nothing new. In fact, it is as old as the Indian nations themselves and has its origins in the exercise of governmental power by the tribes long before the advent of non-Indians to the continent. American law recognized that origin as completely independent from that of the United States. Indian governments, then, are the only political entities in this country which do not derive their essential authority from the United States or any of its political subdivisions.

The U.S., however, has claimed the authority to limit the powers of Indian government. In the past hundred years, Congress had taken jurisdiction over many civil and criminal matters away from tribal courts and in some cases abolished tribal law and government altogether. Though Indian governments have protested each of these assumptions of power by the federal government and consequent limitations of Indian sovereignty, they have failed to effect a change in basic doctrine. The position of the United States, reinforced by many Supreme Court decisions, is that it can limit sovereignty as it chooses.



The expression of sovereignty by Indian governments takes many forms, ranging from a purely practical concern to control reservation resources for economic gain to a profound conviction that Indian nations are, in fact, *nations* that are fully independent of the United States. Whatever form it takes, however, sovereignty evokes the deepest responses of Indian people. It is the remnant of a history full of injustice and, many Indians believe, offers the best protection against future injustice through its legal barriers to outside intervention in tribal affairs. The key to understanding sovereignty is to see it not only as legal doctrine, subject to the changing interpretations of courts, but as a deeply held attitude of independence whether or not it was ever formalized in a treaty.

There are over four hundred Indian communities in the country, and they are divided over how best to secure their governmental and property rights. For some, the federal trusteeship theory holds promise as well as dangers. They reason that federal protection will be their best defense against state and private encroachment and so rely, though with some misgivings, on federal efforts to preserve the Indian resource base and to facilitate the exercise of Indian sovereignty. The catch is that federal interpretations of Indian rights often conflict with tribal interpretations, and federal agencies, principally the Bureau of Indian Affairs, intrude into the daily operation of tribal government. Indian leaders want to preserve federal protection but reduce federal intervention. That is a difficult balance to strike.

Other Indian groups believe the only hope for survival is to reject the whole concept of trusteeship and rely instead on the aboriginal sovereignty of Indian nations. Hoping to buttress their case by developing an international movement among indigenous peoples to secure greater recognition of their rights, these Indian advocates look forward to a time when the international community will respect the independent sovereignty of their governments. That time is a long way off, however, and the advocates of the trusteeship doctrine feel they have little choice but to rely on existing American law rather than on some future international structure which may or may not come to be.

These are difficult choices, intertwined with complex legal considerations that obscure to the general public the nature of Indian rights. What is certain is that non-Indian competition for the use of Indian resources will intensify, leading to continuing struggles over Indian sovereignty as well as land.



— Institutional Development —

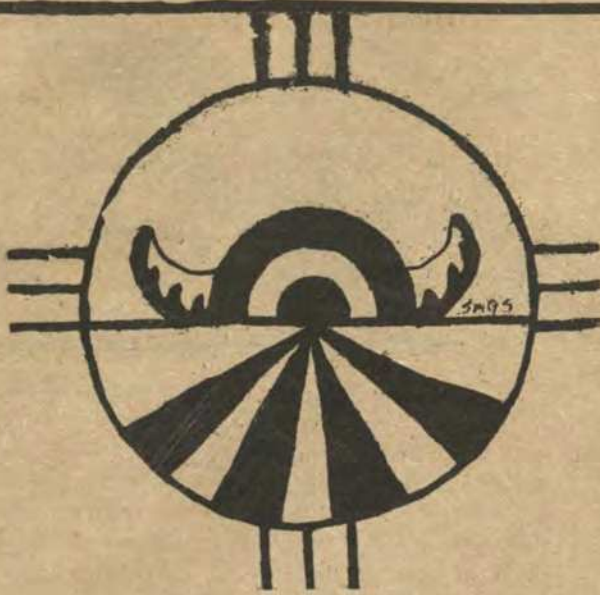
Even if Indians are ultimately successful in securing rights to land and sovereignty for the permanent homelands they seek, they still must develop the institutions of governance, education and business to make Indian communities viable entities. And they must train Indian people to assume professional roles now largely held by non-Indians — the lawyers, the planners, the resource managers, the medical and educational staff that must operate Indian institutions. The decade of the 1970's was one of great progress in these areas, but a great deal remains to be done.

Many Indian nations have developed independent institutions not out of an abstract concern with self-determination but because of the complete neglect of their needs or outright mistreatment by surrounding non-Indian communities and governments. Tribal courts have been greatly strengthened over the past decade and many new codes of laws developed because the federal, state and county courts and police forces have tended to ignore law enforcement problems on reservation land. In many states non-Indian child welfare agencies have been guilty of an over zealous effort to move Indian children to non-Indian foster and adoptive homes. Where non-Indian welfare laws discriminated against the Indian home and community environment, Indians found themselves losing as many as one third of their children to off-reservation foster homes. In response to that threat, Indians pressed for exclusive jurisdiction over child welfare issues affecting their communities, and they won it through federal legislation passed in 1978. Yet to implement that jurisdictional authority many tribes had to write new juvenile codes, rationalize their procedures, and sometimes develop new courts in order to handle the case load.

This is part of a general pattern throughout the past decade in the Indian quest for self-determination. As they secured recognition of their rights through court decisions and Congressional facilitating legislation, they have had to meet new tests of institutional sophistication.

During the 1970's Indians also created a great number of advocacy and service organizations to help begin a national effort to give tribes greater control over their own affairs. Organizations have been established to promote Indian interests in education, health, law, reservation planning, and many other areas. But most reservation leaders see these groups as playing a less significant role in the future as tribal governments become stronger and develop the ability to use their public powers. Though there will always be a need for national organizations to address the major issues affecting all Indian nations, the basic element in Indian institutional life will remain the community government.

These Indian governments must have professional expertise at their command in order to make use of resources and manage their own institutions. In the past, that expertise had been controlled by non-Indians, and many communities have felt manipulated by non-Indian managers or lawyers who sometimes exercised more power over reservations than the elected leaders. The decade of the 1970's produced an enormous increase in the numbers of Indians graduating from professional schools and entering influential positions in federal and tribal governments. The most important contributions thus far have been made by Indian lawyers.



— The Indian Professionals —

The Shoshone and Bannock people of Idaho have been among the first to entrust their legal problems to an Indian attorney. In February of 1980 the Idaho legislature was debating a resolution calling for the transfer to the western states of the public lands controlled by the federal Bureau of Land Management. This resolution was to be Idaho's contribution to the Sagebrush Rebellion, a movement among several western states to assert their rights to the vast federal lands in the intermountain region. Though Indian reservations are not part of the public domain and were thus excluded from the terms of the resolution, the rights of the Idaho tribes to use public lands for hunting, fishing, religious practices and other purposes might be threatened by the transfer, and so the Fort Hall Shoshone-Bannock people sent a delegation to testify before the legislature. Their delegation's legal representative was a young Indian attorney named Larry Echohawk.

"It's clear to us there is no appreciation for the rights of Indian people," he said to the legislators. "Maybe it was not your intent or the intent of the State of Idaho to infringe on Indian rights, but I can assure you that will be the end result — infringement." Serving as general counsel to Fort Hall, Echohawk spoke with reasoned determination but could hardly sway the resolve of a legislature trying to make a general protest in the name of states' rights. Nevertheless, his role and appearance there were significant. At thirty-two, his youth and the fact that he is Indian set him apart in the ranks of tribal attorneys.

For three years, he turned down offers from prestigious firms and worked in an independent practice aimed at defending individual and tribal Indian rights. He had won some difficult cases: a Goshute woman regained custody of seven children illegally taken from her by Utah authorities, a rape charge was dismissed against an Indian man because the law he was prosecuted under made it easier for an Indian than a non-Indian to be convicted, five small bands of desert Paiute people regained federal recognition after they had lost their legal tribal status in the 1950's. Echohawk built his reputation with cases like these among Indian governments in his region, and the Fort Hall general counsel contract was one result. Though Larry Echohawk is unusual in his field, he is not the only Indian attorney trying to gain the confidence of tribal governments accustomed to entrusting their legal problems to large non-Indian firms.

In December of 1979 the Navajo Nation Council held an unprecedented debate over the nature of its legal representation. A new firm of three young Navajo lawyers was directly challenging the non-Indian attorneys who had held the large general counsel contract for the Navajo tribe, by far the largest Indian nation in the U.S.. In an atmosphere of tension and anger, accusations and spirited rebuttals were exchanged in the council chambers, a debate made more confusing by the necessity of translating back and forth into English and Navajo. One of the young Navajo attorneys was given a chance to speak.

Dressed in a pin-strip suit, Albert Hale addressed the council in Navajo. "My census number is 53512. I speak to you in Navajo. I come from Klagehoh. I herded sheep. I grew up under the supervision of my grandmother looking over my shoulder.... With us we will never leave here. We grew up here." It was a completely candid plea, confessing inexperience in many areas of law, promising greater economy in the legal budget, and pledging above all to respect the wishes of the council. The debate continued for several days, and many council members emphasized the importance of hiring their own people. But in the end the council voted to retain the non-Indian firm, offering only a small contract to the Navajo lawyers. Though the council was not ready to entrust its legal work to a new firm, the debate stimulated the tribal government to set new standards of performance for its legal counsel. Today, that debate continues, and many observers feel it is only a matter of time before the Navajo Nation selects some of its own people for its legal representatives.

A great number of Indians have achieved high positions in the federal agencies responsible for tribal programs, but their sensitivity to tribal needs has not changed the adversarial role that most Indian communities attribute to the federal bureaucracy. It is more important in their view to limit federal intervention and to keep Indian professionals on the reservation than simply to fill the slots of an inflexible bureaucracy with Indian people. The development of strong Indian governmental institutions requires the commitment of young professionals to the challenges of reservation work, often at the expense of higher salaries and more comfortable living conditions available in major urban areas. Professionals are urgently needed in fields rarely entered in the past by Indian people, including engineering, resource economics and management, planning, and medicine, among others. Law and education have attracted numerous Indian students, possibly because of the expanded scholarship programs in these fields, and similar incentives may be helpful in increasing the number of Indian professionals for critical positions in Indian government.

— The Future —

Although Indians have made progress during the 1970's toward the achievement of Indian-defined goals of self-government — Congress has expanded Indian services and enabled tribes to operate them, Indian governmental institutions have developed along with a new class of Indian professionals, and various legal victories have given some degree of reality to native claims to land and resources — nevertheless, Indian leaders are preoccupied not with the past but with the prospect of a difficult

future. Because the Congress of the United States has assumed for itself so much power over the lives, property and institutions of Indian peoples, Indians realize that they could lose in a moment all they have accomplished if the Congress decided to take it away again. And the signals from Congress, the federal administrative agencies, the White House and the various states which have tried more consistently to limit Indian rights have created deep concern.

Congress has resisted efforts to abrogate Indian treaties in a wholesale manner but has been receptive to proposals from specific states where Indian resource ownership and use have been opposed by influential segments of the non-Indian public. Fishing rights in Michigan, Washington and California have been the subject of exceptionally bitter controversy, and Indians worked hard to defeat in 1980 the elements of a fisheries enhancement bill that would also have limited Indian regulatory control over tribal fisheries. Indians of the Columbia and the Missouri river basins organized to oppose a Carter White House initiative to quantify their water rights because they saw that effort as part of a thinly disguised policy of reducing Indian entitlements.

Such measures deal with problems which do not arouse much public concern but nevertheless portend to Indian leaders a tendency at the federal level to limit Indian access to vital resources and curb the exercise of public powers Indians feel are extremely important to their economic future.

Relationships between Indian nations and state governments remain problematic at best. The states view Indian government as an anomaly that challenges and repudiates the efforts of the states to extend their regulatory powers over Indian lands. Though there are innumerable disputes between these two levels of government over such matters as taxation, environmental protection, zoning and local law enforcement, there are also efforts underway to find areas of possible agreement among these long-time adversaries. A Commission on State-Tribal Relations has been established to study the use of compacts and other out-of-court settlements procedures to replace costly litigation. While Indian leaders are wary of compromising their rights through such agreements, they also want to secure greater governmental cooperation from state and federal entities in order to bolster the general recognition of their legal status. Cooperative management plans, shared law enforcement responsibilities and tax collection agreements with the states all help accustom the non-Indian agencies to dealing with Indian nations as governments, and the routinization of those relationships will mark an important step forward for the tribes.

Indian nations will continue to need extensive legal assistance, both through non-profit litigating firms and through conventional attorney contracts, in order to defend their rights against contrary claims by the states and to build their governmental and legal structures. They must educate more of their young people to operate new Indian institutions, and acquire the expertise to manage resources for economic security. Their great hope may be that non-Indian America will find it easier to deal with self-sufficient and relatively independent Indian governments than with a poverty-stricken population forever dependent on federal aid.



Why are there so many unpleasant inferences about Native People who "don't look like Indians?"

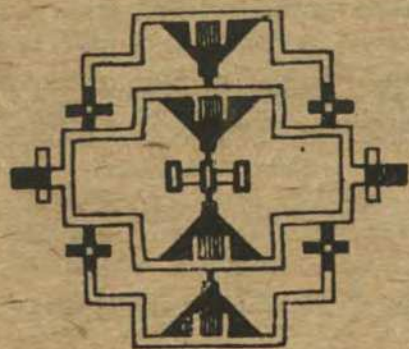


SECOND CLASS INDIANS

by Jamake Highwater

"We are all related."

Lakota pipe ceremony chant



About twenty years ago when I first visited Acoma Pueblo in New Mexico, the Indian lady at the entrance gazed at me momentarily and said: "You're some kind of Indian...so you don't have to pay the entrance fee."

The remark was hardly gracious but it filled me with delight, for at that time I was known by my step-father's name, Marks, and the only thing that was strongly *Indian* about me was my deep, silent reverence for my lost heritage.

Since those days I have reclaimed my name and I have also travelled the arduous journey back to my cultural identity. But this process has taught me several bitter lessons about the limits of human tolerance. I believe these personal revelations point to a predicament in and around the Indian world that makes them larger and more important issues than the experiences of just one person.

What has always seemed to me to be the most striking quality about primal peoples, such as American Indians, is their inclusive attitude toward both experience and human beings — in sharp contrast to the highly exclusive frame of reference which marks the world-view of the dominant, Western cultures.

My mother, despite her complex blend of French Canadian and Blackfeet (Blood) ancestry, had somehow retained much of the special inclusivity of her Indian identity. She rarely expressed intolerance toward anything or anyone, and she was always capable of sustaining utter faith in the most contradictory realities, which is doubtlessly how she managed to keep alive her innermost identity as an Indian despite all the events that took her farther and farther away from her origins.

Although my mother's mother and father had apparently died of starvation and she and her sister were passed from one foster home to another, she was completely untouched by loathing for the self-righteousness of her various guardians. I suspect she had been christened but she retained an unperturbable faith in her tribal realities, which she passed along to me in a strong and constant voice. And although she could neither read nor write she spun her fragmented recollections of Blackfeet and French and faltering English into rare and enlightened acceptance of the world and all the myriad ideals that preoccupy it.

From my mother I learned to stay alive by dreaming myself into existence, no matter how many forces attempted to negate or to confine my sense of identity and pride. From her I learned that everything is real.

Eventually my research and my many travels made me aware that this inclusive kind of reality is typical of traditional Indians and other primal peoples. These groups tend to provide a place in their multiverse for everyone and everything, and envision truth as multifarious rather than singular, fixed and eternal.

As Paul Radin, the noted scholar once observed, "The Indian does not make the separation into personal as contrasted with impersonal in our (Western) sense at all." What he seems to be interested in is the whole question of existence, the entire scope of reality; and for Indians everything that is perceived by the senses, thought about, or felt, dreamed about or imagined, exists as an inclusive aspect of the real world.

It is therefore not remarkable that Indians originally greeted invading Europeans without dismay or hostility. Likewise, as many experts have repeatedly demonstrated, Indians were not threatened by the extraordinary or the exceptional. They did not have a consensus of "insanity" and "perversion," but tended to regard unusual people with wonder and to provide them a special place in their world rather than exclude or confine them.



There is, for instance, a famous report on the Zuni Indians by anthropologist Matilda Coxe Stevenson, based on fieldwork dating to 1896-97. There is a moving description of the death of Stevenson's friend We'wha, a Zuni male transvestite, whose original gender had been unknown to Stevenson, and apparently unknown to President Cleveland and other politicians whom We'wha visited during a six-month stay in Washington, D.C. The Zuni had always known, but We'wha's gender did not matter to them. Among primal peoples a person is whom he or she says he or she is — or, as my mother often expressed it to me, "Do not be afraid of what you are becoming." To exist is to be part of nature.

If the traditional pre-Columbian Indian world was inclusive, how is it possible that in the past 100 years (and in the last decade of militancy especially) Indians have become so aggressively exclusive? How has it come about that people like my mother, or the countless other Indians who grew up in isolation in Alberta, Texas, California, Virginia, or Maine are somehow excluded from Indian identity and must provide exceptional credentials in order to gain access to that geographically narrow strip of America, in the Southwest and Northwest, where so-called "real" Indians have treaty numbers or are on the rolls of reservations, which are themselves the creation of just the kind of obsessive exclusivity that is the basis of the Western mind?

This means that we have to address ourselves to some unpopular questions: why don't non-Indians have the right to paint and write about Indian subject matter? How much power can we give certain long-standing centers of Indian elitism which lay down the law for the entire Western Hemisphere on the subject of who is and who is not a "proper" Indian? How can we retain tribal sovereignty and still support the identities of Indians from isolated, non-reservation areas? How do we alter that reservation attitude that urban Indians are somehow "less Indian" than they are? Why are there so many cruel jokes about blacks who are validly part-Indian? It is estimated that about 40% of the black population of the United States is part Indian.

Why are there so many unpleasant inferences about Native people who "don't look like Indians"?—whatever that very stereotypical phrase is supposed to mean. Why don't we stop making jokes about Jewish Indians? We don't joke about Indians who are Christian—so why do we find it amusing that many Indians are Jews? In short, why is Indian and white humor so often marked by naive racism, sexism, and stereotypical images? Why have Indians readily adapted the cruelty of the dominant society to their own ambitious purposes, to the obtaining of authority, power and personal control?

Why is there an inclination to contest the authenticity of Native American painters, writers, actors and spokespeople who have attained a newly acquired intellectual and artistic maturity? Why has the career, for instance, of Fritz Scholder been marked by violent antagonism among Indians, who don't seem to know what Scholder's painting is all about, and whites, who are always anxious to

uphold the elitist stereotype of an ill-informed Indian? Why did the Indian leader point out "the uncertain origin" of the great Indian art organizer, the late Yeffe Kimball, rather than give her memory the unlimited respect and admiration it deserves? Why did a group of militant Indians belittle the monumental work of Indian anthropologist Dr. Frederick Dockstader by saying that "he changes tribes depending on the audience he's talking to."

Native American exclusivity and snobbery have caused enormous pain and confusion. Many Indians don't feel that they came by their Indian heritage honestly. They wait until they know you well before they confide that their parents were Native people. Or they apologize for claiming Indian blood.

I don't know exactly how this terrible self-consciousness originated but it has obviously done a great deal to promote an elitism among enrolled, reservation Indians whose heritage is apparently, though not necessarily, more substantial than that of urban Indians. This self-consciousness has been used as a political weapon by Indians, anxious to seize or maintain power on the basis of a self-serving definition of authenticity. And meanwhile the average person in the dominant society tends to take pleasure in the in-fighting, the name-calling, and the power-plays of peoples and groups that learned how to fight dirty by watching the Western world.

Of course, I really should not be making these critical comments. I am an Indian only because I say I am Indian. I am not enrolled on the reservations of my mother or father; I went to high school with non-Indians, and I don't have a bunch of aggressive relatives on a reservation who can back me up. I came by my heritage through the legacy of my mother and my own long efforts to reclaim an obscured identity.

The big moment in my life came through the recognition of my work by Indians and non-Indians who are experts in the Native American experience. These critics, historians and writers have looked at my work and not speculated about my "pretensions."

The grand climax of my professional and personal life took place on March 29th 1979 at the Lethbridge University in Alberta, Canada, when Ed Calf Robe, Elder of the Blood Reserve of Blackfeet Indians, a member of the Horns Society, and a descendant of the famous chief Calf Robe, conferred a new name upon me to honor my achievements on behalf of my people. It is a ceremony usually reserved for *mimipoka*, "favored children" of the Blackfeet Nation. My new name is Piitai Sahkomaapii, meaning "Eagle Son." This name-ceremony was the vindication of my mother's constant effort to keep my heritage alive within me. Sadly, she had passed away and could not see the embrace of my people for which she had longed all her life.



"If the traditional, pre-Columbian Indian world was inclusive, how is it possible that in the past 100 years (and in the last decade of militancy especially) Indians have become aggressively exclusive?"

My father, on the other hand, was not a traditional Indian. He was a renegade, and an alcoholic—a marvelous, energetic man who helped to organize the American Indian Rodeo Association back in the 1940s. He called himself by many names during his career in circuses, carnivals, and rodeos, but by the time he met my then sixteen-year-old mother somewhere in the American Northwest his name was Highwater. He came from Virginia, Tennessee or North Carolina, depending on his memory and his mood, and he knew very little about his Eastern Cherokee heritage despite his intense pride in being an Indian.

He was a very dark, tall and handsome man, with great athletic abilities. Eventually he became a rodeo clown, and travelled around the endless pow-wow circuits. Then producers on locations in Montana, Wyoming, the Dakotas, and down in Arizona's Monument Valley began using my father as a stuntman in western films, which prompted a new career and brought about much travelling and extended visits to Southern California for my family.

My father died hundreds of times for John Wayne. Then, when I was about ten years old, he died for the last time in an automobile collision outside of Gallup, New Mexico, where he often disappeared on sprees. I was adopted by my father's closest friend, a castabout, an occasional actor in films, and an ex-circus aerialist named Alexander Markopolous; and I spent my adolescence in his San Fernando Valley home and became "J Marks."

Recently I was invited to lecture on Indian arts at the Western Carolina University, in Cullowhee, the center of my father's Cherokee Nation. At a party given for me at the home of Mary and Going Back Chiltoskey I was given an official embrace: "Your father would be proud of you. This is where you belong."

If these expressions of acceptance can be mine, then there is surely hope for all the people in the Americas in whom the recollections of an Indian heritage prevails. Yet, it would be more magnanimous were these ideas and hopes the proclamation of some great-grandchild of one of the famous Indians, the esteemed descendant of a reservation traditionalist or holy person, a chief or a tribal chairman—rather than the remarks of someone like me who spent so many years and so much effort finding my way back home.

I cannot help feeling deeply about these ideas and I cannot avoid expressing them, because I have been a second-class Indian most of my life and I know what it feels like to exist between two worlds, neither of which willingly accepts you on your own terms.

My work has given me abundant access to many different regions and many kinds of Native peoples whose desire to be proud of their Indian blood has stirred and heartened me. I have heard all of the

cruel jokes and I have endured all the half-truths and stupid innuendos. And, having found my way into acceptance, I feel that I must not hide behind my achievements but speak out for all second-class Indians. Not just to dominant society which is so willing to listen to the degrading inferences about Indian celebrities, but to those Indians who have learned too much about contempt and ridicule during our 400 years of subjugation. If we do not speak out about these unpopular subjects many of us will surely be lost in the dreadful political and egotistical crossfire that inevitably accompanies a repressed and abused peoples' clamor for self-realization and dignity.

"All forms under creation," wrote Joseph Epes Brown, "were understood by Indians to be mysteriously interrelated. Everything was a relative to every other being or thing. Thus, nothing existed in isolation. The intricately interrelated threads of the spider's web was referred to depict the world. The same reference occurs in Native American art. This is a profound 'symbol,' when it is understood. The people obviously observed that the threads of the web were drawn out from within the spider's very being. They also recognized that the threads in concentric circles were sticky whereas the threads leading to the center were smooth!"

One vivid expression of the tribal sense of this centeredness is perfectly expressed in the Plain Indian ceremonies involving communal smoking. At the conclusion of the pipe ceremonies the participants murmur: "We are all related." The act of smoking is a ritual of communion with everything in creation, with every possibility of being—what lies before us plainly and also what lies beyond our understanding and knowledge.

"We are all related." It is just as my mother always told me: in the Native American experience all things are possible and therefore all things are acceptable. It is therefore desirable for our societal structures and attitudes to be bold and large enough to affirm rather than to deny, to accept rather than to reject. The tribal relationship of Indians is therefore never based upon the tolerance of others, but upon the experience of the self as an intrinsic part of others. "We are all related."



Alaska = "A Matter of Perspectives"

by Vernita Katchatag

PART ONE:

Sometime early in this century a science fiction writer coined a phrase to describe the western way of life that has evolved to its present, 20th century form. The phrase, "civilization as we know it," was at first sobering, especially as it was used then (and usually later) to counterpoint the destruction of such a civilization by extra-terrestrial forces.

As usage of the phrase increased, however, and as the world gradually became more knowledgeable about the rest of the universe (as witness the success of movies like *Close Encounters*, *Star Wars*, *E.T.*, etc.), the connotation became more laughable than threatening: for on Earth in the 1980's, what could be more secure than civilization - as YOU know it? Disease, poverty, superstition - all are being conquered, one by one, and your civilization is at the forefront of each battle.

And yet, when those words are applied to the cultures of many so-called "primitive" peoples such as the Alaskan Eskimo, the prospect of the destruction of "civilization as we know it" has become more a foreseeable reality than a nameless threat. And it is ironic that the peril has sprung from "civilization as YOU know it."

It is purely a matter of perspectives.

"Perspectives," you say, "how so?"

Well, "civilization as we know it" (as coined by the phrase) encompasses the planet Earth. Let us picture in our minds the Earth, hanging in space. As we move closer and closer to this planet, its ceaseless spinning motion slows enough so that, when we are in its orbit, we can see it divided into the seven continents, the seven seas. And as we approach nearer yet, the myriad blues resolve themselves into mountains and lakes and rivers and streams.

We find ourselves eventually suspended over Alaska, and we study its coastlines, its huge land mass. The shape of Alaska has become a familiar one to us - it has appeared in various magazines and trade journals, and its riches have become apparent to environmentalists, developers, wilderness-seekers - and the oil industry. Now, for the matter of perspectives:

When an oil company executive studies a map of Alaska he sees, not its tall peaks and a million lakes and ponds, but shaded areas where the oil is. He



Forget what the oil company executive sees, or the politician, or the faceless mass that must have confronted the eyes of that ecumenical conference. When a person and a people depend upon the land for their lives, even a paper map as large as the land itself, is not big enough to make them forget the physical realities of that land.

probably knows by heart where the black gold is known to lie, and which areas are heavy with petroleum reserves waiting to be tapped. Norton Sound, where I come from, is a prime candidate for oil and gas development in the 80's and, indeed, the rest of this century.

There goes "civilization" - as I know it.

A politician, on the other hand, will not see the shape of Alaska quite the same way. He sees voting districts, little dotted lines. There are no visible delineations for actual political power, but he will see the division of political power in his mind: where the Democrats carry the vote, and where the Republicans are strong. If he is an unusual politician, he may even recognize Fairbanks as the land of the Libertarians. To the politician, civilization as I know it is called, simply, "the Bush".

Long ago, the church leaders from every denomination then recognized by the American Council of Churches held a national conference and at this conference they held up a map of Alaska and said, in effect, "Here is a wilderness of heathen - sic'em!" And so the map of Alaska became divided in that serendipical way into presbyteries and dioceses and however else those ministers saw fit.

It is perhaps ninety years later and I, a 'heathen', am still recuperating from the strictures placed upon my parents' and grandparents' generations by the Evangelical Covenant Church. For you see, "civilization" - as they (those old people) knew it - died one day around the turn of the century when some kindly extra-terrestrial (he might as well have been, for all those Eskimos knew) told them to repent, for they were sinners bound for hell, and

everything they had done to survive up until then, and the ways they had found to make themselves comfortable in their harsh homeland, were WRONG and they would have to change.

What of perspectives?

In the eyes of the courts, a map of Alaska becomes a tangle of jurisdiction: the borders overlap and cross each other until it become difficult to say where the U.S. Government ends and where the State of Alaska begins. That is, it is difficult to know who orders whom around, except that in all cases, the control over the land and its resources, over "civilization as WE know it," is held by entities who were not born yet, by people who do not want to be here, by people who will fly south like the birds at retirement time, to die.

This concept of perspectives came to me one day as I stooped under a hot sun to seek out yet another handful of elusive blueberries, at a little spot some 13 miles up the coast from my home village of Unalakleet. With me was Jean Maxwell, a woman with whom I have enjoyed many conversations about the lifestyle I have come to re-appreciate. In the course of our research into the potential impacts of harvest disruption and oil and gas development upon Norton Sound and Unalakleet, Jean has managed to become somewhat more of an Eskimo in her outlook and lifestyle than I am after my decade-and-a-half of urban living.

As we gathered berries in the stillness that is Egavik, my mind began its usual meandering about the work we were striving to complete, about Egavik itself: I thought how, after a week spent cushioned in Egavik's peace, even Unalakleet's relatively small volume of noise jarred my ears. I thought how Egavik must resemble the way things were before my ancestor's lives were changed forever by that first airplane, by that first missionary, by that first recognition of an alien tongue. I thought of the OCS hearings I had attended, and the city council meeting where a representative from the Department of Transportation so blandly assumed that we were all for expansion of the village, that he neglected to ask, "Would the village want to expand," and instead opened his remarks by saying, "This is where it is possible for you to go when you begin to expand your city limits."

I thought of the maps I had seen distributed with the Environmental Impact Statements for Norton Sound and other areas, and suddenly, I heard a jet making its milkrun over the pole 'way overhead, and slowly began to feel invisible, like an impersonal dot on the huge map that is required to do justice to the vastness that is Alaska.

I looked down at the berries I had just picked, Egavik blueberries, dusty-looking and dark, and then I looked around at the tundra, the willows that lined the slough, the gravelly point of land with our tents sitting on it, and beyond that to the far-off ripples on the shiny surface of Norton Sound. I looked again at the berry bushes that surrounded us, and at a single berry in my hand, and I thought in amazement, "It's purely a matter of perspectives, isn't it?"

Forget what the oil company executive sees, or the politician, or the faceless mass that must have confronted the eyes of that ecumenical conference. When a person and a people depend upon the land for their lives, even a paper map as large as the land itself, it not big enough to make them forget the physical realities of that land.

When I look at a map of Alaska, my eyes go automatically to the the northwestern coast, and they search until they find Unalakleet, and after that day in Egavik, they go up an inch or so, and find almost the exact spot where I stood with the blueberry in my hand.

PART TWO:

I recognize the value of my own perspective. But it is not enough for only me to see Alaska's map in terms of blueberry bushes, silver salmon for supper, clean air, familial togetherness, and the dangers that confront my way of life.

It is not enough, because I have to reach the oil company executive, and the ears of government agencies, and if I fail, I must convince the courts of the rightness of my own opinion. I order to do this, I must fall in with the western culture's emphasis on communication, which has gotten to the point where words themselves are being used to replace weapons. Words, millions and billions of them, bombard the average city-dweller from every side as she goes about her daily work. Our love affair with communication has persuaded us to believe that any issue can be the right issue IF the right words are used to defend it. IF the right words can convince the right people.

As a result there is an assumption being made in certain quarters, that those who do not or cannot articulate themselves or their feelings have, in fact, nothing to say. And the rightness of a cause has become an abstract concept, the validity of which is wholly based upon the glibness of its defenders.

Hence, as long as an agency or an oil company can convince the government that they have fulfilled the word of the law, then they have nothing to fear from that law. Legal battles to dispute the words of oil company attorneys, words to the effect that they have "made the effort" to fulfill the law, have been lost already - to the higher wordsmanship of these well-paid lawyers. And if a group of people disagrees with that agency or that oil company, they have no recourse but to do battle in those arenas where words count: in the courts, in the legislatures in Juneau and D.C., in the boardrooms atop the oil company buildings.

Words have been used to accomplish treachery upon what has been recognized as one of the oldest in the world, the Alaskan Eskimos. By treachery, I mean a malicious intent for profit with no regard for the abstract or physical values of that civilization, and what is more, a malicious intent coupled with words that mask and justify the destruction.



What else can I call it, when the Environmental Impact Statement for Norton Sound says, "where there is competition for the use of potable waters traditionally used by the residents of Norton Sound, the impacts (of oil and gas development) are expected to be high to very high?" On the face of it, that statement is an innocuous one, almost invisible within the sheer volume of a document that is three inches thick. Indeed, my eyes went over it several times, but my brain refused to let it pass. So I sat and thought about it, and as I explored its full meaning, I became almost nauseous at its simple audacity:

They mean to say that even if we have been the ones who have had the use of those waters since time began, we are going to feel the impact of oil and gas development in Norton Sound pretty hard, because when it comes down to who gets to use that water in the future, DURING oil and gas development, the oil companies will prevail. The U.S. Government prepared this document - and they had no question in their minds about who would get the water in the end.

I recognize the value of my own perspective. But it is not enough for only me to see Alaska's map in terms of blueberry bushes, silver salmon for supper, clean air, familial togetherness, and the dangers that confront my way of life.

I add here that the entire environmental impact statement reads like a wish list for the oil industry - not glaringly, but subtle assumptions are made within that volume that all but preclude any hopes for equal consideration for local residents, should oil and gas development begin in ANY region.

What is it but treachery, when the schools pay lip service to the demands of Eskimos for bi-lingual classes for the young - and then say firmly that these classes shall NOT be required subjects - but English SHALL BE, thus leaving the important question of the value of knowledge of their native tongue up to the whims of children?

I do not care what the Evangelical Covenant Church of America says, but I say they practiced treachery when they came into Unalakleet in the name of the Lord and established a church and a school in the village, claiming what has come to be the only piece of title-free land within our city's limits. They then proceeded to build a cabin at our informal resort area, North River, and claimed the land surrounding the cabin for a subsistence gardening area. In the 1980's, they have progressed to the point that businessmen from Minnesota (home state for their church) come in the summer to fish the Unalakleet River, and a dozen young people affiliated with the Covenant Church came from Minnesota to live in the school's dormitory while working in our village co-operative's cannery, (thus taking 12 jobs our own youth could and would have gladly taken - and the cannery itself, was managed this year by the Kotzebue Norton Sound Development Company - owned by a member of the Minnesota Covenant Church. Amen.

I have seen the clumsy meetings conducted by the OCS office, the disorganized planning that allows a team of oil industry representatives to fly in, apologize for the fact that they are not the decision-makers (and thus cannot give us firm answers) and present an agenda that responds not to the concerns of Norton Sound villagers, but to the current concerns of Eskimos in the Beaufort Sea area. The meetings were conducted during prime subsistence-gathering periods - and then we were told the poor turnout showed we did not care.

At one OCS meeting we were reassured by a Department of Natural Resources spokesman, not to worry: oil and gas development was not a sure thing yet, the lease sales might still be cancelled. Less than three weeks later, a city council meeting was interrupted so we could listen to a team from Sohio say, "Oil and gas development in the Norton Sound area is inevitable - we may as well get to know each other better." And their public relations spokeswoman said Sohio hoped to bring to Unalakleet programs that would enhance our "human development" - the opera, perhaps, she said - or ballet! As though we are somehow lacking in humanity the way we are today.

I hope I never live to see the day a team of Eskimos flies to Schaumburg, Illinois (or Fairband, Alaska) - to tell an audience that they have come to enhance their human development!

Now we are faced with the repeal of a law that supports and defends and enforces our right to a



subsistence lifestyle. The people who support this repeal say, among other things, that we the Native people of Alaska do not live off the land anymore. (The current environmental impact statement says we should not hope for oil/gas-related employment, since we live a purely subsistence lifestyle...) Another reason given by supporters of repeal is that they no longer want to be controlled by the federal government. And it is hard to tell by the wording of the proposition on the ballot, which way is the right way to vote.

I say I will vote NO on the proposition, but deep inside I think it makes no difference to me whether my lifestyle is controlled by the federal or the state government. The result will be control of the Alaskan Natives either way: by faceless entities and laws enacted by those who do not know a silver from a chum from a pink; who refuse to believe that we can get homesick for the taste of our own kinds of food, that our bodies really do suffer from a diet of pork chops and hot dogs and hamburger. The Dept. of Fish and Game says we harvested 53,000 salmon in Norton Sound in 1980, that works out to a grand total of 4 salmon per person! It makes me believe in the joke currently going around, that if want to get rid of mosquitos we should turn them over to an agency like Fish and Game!

I can say that I have CHOSEN to return to a subsistence lifestyle, and it is with no small amount of chagrin that I realize that it will be harder to DO so than to SAY it. But there are people at home who have never LEFT the village, or who only make brief and reluctant forays into the city for medical help. The ones I speak of did not CHOOSE their lifestyle. They only live it from year to year, perhaps aware on the margins of their lives that there are organizations and curious people who view them as anachronisms ignorant of a "better" way of life - people who never stop to consider that OUR way might be better.

I can also point to those who left the village because they were required to by military service, or to get schooling urged upon them by guidance counselors at Mt. Edgecumbe or the BIA teachers in the village, or at the behest of those same well-intentioned missionaries I spoke of earlier. "How will you get a job, if you have no crafts?" they ask. "What will you do for a living?" "Money doesn't grow on trees," they say, "you have to learn, to earn." I have never heard an outside teacher say, "Good luck in your hunting, trapping, fishing."

These people are mainly in my age bracket, some a few years older, some are younger. They left for the cities and discovered the truth of Emerson's words, "The great mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation." For what else but desperate can you call their attempts to assimilate themselves into a world that rejected them at every turn? A society at total odds with their own time-honored values? A world where the dollar outweighs the intrinsic values of honesty, and loyalty and beauty.

Realizing that they were not happy and could not survive in the cities, these young people have returned to the village in increasing numbers, only

to find that their years away have made them incapable and ignorant of the practices necessary for them to support themselves off the land. Some of them have set themselves grimly (or joyfully) to the task of re-learning forgotten skills, of accompanying more experienced hunters and fishermen and watching their every move, of helping other women to cut fish, skin animals, salt herring eggs on kelp, and asking endlessly, "How do you do this?" "What do we do now?" "How come you do it that way?"



As for others of that generation - how many of you here can say truthfully that several of your uncles and aunts died of cirrhosis of the liver; two of your cousins have been convicted of shooting and killing men while under the influence of alcohol; three uncles are gone, one was shot, one was stabbed and the other drove off on a snowmobile to freeze himself to death - two died drunk; that you personally know several families where shootings (and killings) have resulted from alcohol abuse; that you live in a place where the guns and knives have to be hidden at least once or twice or three times a summer? How many of you can recite a fearsome litany of drownings, stabbings, domestic violence, rape - all the grief accompanying the knowledge of a friend or closer person who drank to escape himself and who never quite returns?

It is with a certain horror, and disgust, and sorrow, and indignation, that I say, "I can."

PART THREE:

Once upon a time, the Eskimos were independent of your cash economy. We suffered no disease except starvation, which is, after all, only the natural way to eliminate the weak or lazy. And now they say we had the universal disease of cancer - welcome to the human race as of 1982! We valued ourselves and each task we faced was to benefit only the furtherance of our way of life. Our families were close-knit and self-supporting; the fathers educated the sons, the mothers taught their daughters. There were no orphanages or old folks' homes or day care centers, nor were any needed. We received no grants from the government, but we were also free from laws and regulations and interference: no grants, no strings. Our various religious beliefs stemmed from our attempts to pacify the unknown, but our religious practices hurt no-one and took from no-one. Our customs were our own, and we were not made to feel inferior to anyone else. We were alone in the world, but we were free.

The western civilization thought it necessary to import its beliefs, its social mores, its way of governing, at the expense of our own.

Alaskan Native children from first grade through high school were cajoled to enroll in boarding schools hundreds and hundreds of miles away from their homes, for the sake of "education" - in the western sense, that pointed to jobs, not subsistence. Every summer that they were required to return to their villages, we say our brothers and sisters and sons and daughters become more and more alienated from us: more accustomed to hot and cold running water, soft beds, three hot meals a day, and television, movies, potato chips.

Naturally, after graduation, the village was the last place they wanted to call home. They applied for trade school like Haskell Institute in Kansas and other Indian boarding schools in the Lower 48, and when they ran out of schools, they settled in the cities to try to maintain the comforts to which they had become accustomed, only to realize that life itself is not a boarding school. Their parents in the village did not pay rent on the land they owned. The students did not pay rent in the boarding schools because these schools were maintained by a thoughtful U.S. government agency. The parents in the village lived off the land. In the boarding schools, food was provided and the only requirement was that the students make it to the cafeteria on time. With no substantial, familial examples to follow, many of these products of the boarding school system failed in their attempts to live away from the village.

Again, some either chose the urban lifestyle and pursued it doggedly, and succeeded (in the western concept of success: a mortgage, a car payment every month, an ever-increasing number of martinis at lunch.) And some went down into the ruins of street-living, welfare, or suicide.

It is not enough, because I have to reach the oil company executive, and the ears of government agencies, and if I fail, I must convince the courts of the rightness of my own opinion. In order to do this, I must fall in with the western culture's emphasis on communication, which has gotten to the point where words themselves are being used to replace weapons.

PART FOUR:

Civilization as we knew it is dead. The culture that we are striving to rebuild is made up of survivors: the old people who, rather than submit to government by outsiders merely ignored their existence and continued their age-old practices, waiting for the young to come to their senses; the middle-aged who tried to accept the western ways, found that they could not and came back to learn the Eskimo ways; and the young, successful (in the western sense) urban-dwelling Natives who want for their children what they believe it is too late for themselves to have.

What are we doing to help ourselves?

We are taking the grants - yes. Are we deceiving ourselves about the strings attached to the money? No. I do not believe we will accept bland assumptions by bland government bureaucrats anymore. We need the money to buy ourselves back, to teach our children what we want them to know; to explore ways to do effective battle against blind development; to give ourselves time to examine documents such as the Norton Sound Environmental Impact Statement so that we can use these documents to our own advantage.

In my own experience (and a part of my own history is revealed in this paper) the only way I can explain what kept me away from my home so long is that my youth blinded me from the wisdom of my culture. Fortunately, such wisdom is timeless: it waits for fools like me to catch up. I read once of a woman who lived as a child in the village, but

whose family moved to the city when she was an adolescent. Her painful words were like a cool wind in my mind: she said, "My child has no adult - and my adult has no child," and although I empathized, I was overjoyed that someone else felt as I have, countless times.

Now, when I take my 2½ year old daughter camping and hear her first words telling me about "checking nets," and picking berries and boating; and when my mother, who is a bi-lingual teacher, teaches my daughter another Eskimo word - I feel my old wounds healing and I share with my daughter the satisfaction of growing up: the right way. She will be a whole person.

We are faced with challenge on every front. It is not traditional for the western wheel, once in motion, to allow itself to be stopped. It would not be profitable for the oil companies and other enforcers of "progress" to allow their efforts to milk the land to be stopped. The government, in perpetuation of itself, has shown itself to be a formidable adversary, in the name of the law. Even the churches, in the vanguard of a veritable army of believers, refuse to consider that we 'heathen' might be better off left alone.

And, in the final analysis, our most serious challenge may lie in ourselves. We may yet succumb. Civilization as we knew it may be gone for good. Our elders may die before all of us realize, accept and hurry toward a realization of the value of the old way of life, toward the practices that will enable us to be truly free. Our failures return to haunt us, they dog our footsteps, are thrown at us in newspaper columns and from the podiums of gatherings of people who do not understand us and who do not want to know us. We cannot deny ourselves, nor dispute, nor debate without going on the defensive yet again. ...I spoke earlier about words. It is not my wish for me or my people to HAVE TO BE articulate. The housewife in Omaha has no need to articulate. The 8-year-olds sitting in a classroom in Spokane will probably never need to be especially articulate. The citizens of civilization as YOU know it are no longer faced with the destruction of all the things that make them what they are.

I would rather direct what powers of articulation I have to, say, the writing of a book about the Eskimos, or just a book that would spring from me being ME: woman, Alaskan, universal citizen. I would rather save my words to tell my children exactly how to practice subsistence (after I fully understand what my parents have to teach ME). I would much rather address a classroom full of noisy kids and enchant them into silence with brilliant description of a lifestyle they can enjoy as adults living off the land.

But if there is one thing I have learned from my dealings with the western culture, it is that (chauvinism aside), it is truly "every man for himself" out there, and it is up to me (and others like me) to take as many opportunities as possible to be articulate enough to give a gathering such as this an idea of what I have to lose if someone on the other side turns out to be more convincing than me.

In closing, I would like to direct a challenge to you as scientists and teachers: What perspectives will guide you? Whose flag will you fly, and what direction will you take when you are faced with tables and diagrams and the cold prose of scientific reports that say "The Eskimos of Alaska will be better off in the 20th century if they conform to the western culture?" and that civilization as we know it would be better off destroyed?

— Vernita Katchatag

THE CANADIAN CONSTITUTION:

A New Beginning, or The End of Peace?

(For the purposes of this editorial, I shall use the contemporary semantics of the term "Indigenous" to refer to general grassroots ideology and thought. Specific names of Indigenous Peoples are to be regarded as synonymous with sovereignty by virtue of their endurance to exist in 1983)

Speaking as a citizen of the Mohawk Nation, there are a few undefined (or unasked) questions regarding the event of Canada's formal and bloodless transition from a British colony into an independent country (with the parchment to prove it). I applaud and congratulate Canada for its newly acquired stature among the nations of the world, and for its courageous audacity to assume full responsibility for its every act. Governing a country populated by millions of people from many divergent cultural backgrounds, from so-called Aborigines, French, Blacks, to Viet Nameese exiles, is a complex and a most imposing responsibility. Canadian policy in dealing with immigrant cultures is as simple as granting them Canadian citizenship. Immigrant populations fleeing from war, famine, or depressed countries rarely have any gripes because for them Canadian citizenship and residence is a privilege that is re-inforced by their own subliminal gratitude to Canada for deliverance and sanctuary. However, any similar policy cannot be applied to North America's Indigenous Peoples who choose to retain their ancestral identity as distinct cultures and nations.

I remember a time, little more than a decade ago, when Canada enjoyed an international reputation as the planet's good guy and peace keeper. Abroad, in Europe, Canadians were treated royally and with human respect. Although Canada's humanitarian reputation has been slightly tarnished by certain unpopular events during the past decade or so, redemption remains within the realm of possibility. Canada's international potential as a leader and advocate of human rights is profoundly hopeful. Canada is a democracy, the choice belongs to the people because their government acts on their behalf and in their name. Canada's choice in its manner of dealing with the rights of its Indigenous Peoples is a measure of its integrity and a clue to its intentions.



Prior to further discourse on the Canadian Constitution vs Indigenous Peoples, it is imperative to be provided with a definition of terms presently in use by the Canadian government and those used by those persons who always use the "(other)" space provided in most standard official forms. Canada, under the auspices of section 35, Part II of the Constitution Act, 1982 (which, by the way, went into full force on April 17, 1982), presumes to lump together all Indian, Inuit and Metis people of Canada under the term Aborigine. It is important to note that Section 25 under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, establishes what amounts to a dual system of justice. The Charter contains a provision to remedy a situation where the rights of a Canadian person are infringed upon or denied. Part II of the Constitution entitled "Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada," is not included in the Charter and does not contain a similar provision for remedial action when the rights of an Aborigine are infringed upon or denied. Although Section 25 of this Charter essentially establishes a separate class of Aboriginal, treaty and other rights (including those rights resulting from the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and land claims settlements), it remains to Section 37 of the Constitution Act, 1982 to define what shall remain of these rights.

Canada appears to be attempting to pull off one of the oldest tricks in the colonial trade. The first part of this trick was accomplished through Section 25 which put the whole Indian question on hold. The second stage of this trick came in the guise of Section 35 which is the contemporary of the old time "false promise." On the one hand, Section 35 recognizes and affirms aboriginal and treaty rights, and then, on the other, it defines aboriginal people to include the Indian, Inuit and Metis people of Canada, three large groups which represent very different interests, especially regarding the treaty issue. Somewhere on down the treaty road, at Section 37 Canada will be able to set these greatly divergent interests one against the other. The resulting conflict will result in a deal to Canada's advantage. So, the government invited the aborigines to bring their shopping lists to Ottawa not with the objective of clarifying the issues but rather with an eye toward obscuring the issues even more than they already are.

The aborigines who went to Ottawa were not representative of the Grassroots Indigenous Peoples in Canada. It was simply another case of making an Indian treaty where the principal signers are self-serving, unauthorized citizens of the Nation of Indigenous People which, of course, only exists in the minds of Canada's politicians for the purpose of political convenience. This time around the treaty bottle, the Indian Joe Blows are supposed to



"A sovereign people assume the collective responsibility to determine the quality of life that shall be inherited by their descendants..."

represent ALL Indigenous Peoples in Canada. It is entirely possible that all the decisions regarding aboriginal rights were decided long before March 15, 1982. Deeming all the Indigenous Peoples of Canada as "Aborigines" was a tactic for their own convenience so that they might expedite the nuisance provision of section 37 of The Constitution Act, 1982. If their colonial trick record is any indication of their character and intentions, the aborigines can expect to receive the dark and short end of the Human Rights stick.

The Indigenous Peoples residing in Canada also need to understand some facts which underlie and preclude any claims to sovereignty when sovereignty is defined as the basic human right of unimpeded power over cultural and national self-determination. Sovereignty is a word which has been used nearly to death and it seems that its semantic integrity has become distorted by vague concepts of political power that may be obtained in Ottawa or Washington, D.C. by permission of their federal proprietors. Certainly there is political power to be obtained in these places, but it is molded by their proprietor's objectives and is not tailored for the benefit of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous peoples, on the other hand, have had trouble grasping the idea that sovereignty is something that cannot be lobbied for in oppulent offices in Ottawa or Washington DC.

To my grassroots understanding, sovereignty is an exercise of responsibility, not only to one's self, but to all living things. A sovereign people assume the collective responsibility to determine the quality of life that shall be inherited by their descendants,

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ROBOTIZATION — A SECOND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

A new civilization is dawning. Already the first signs of its coming can be seen and the early visions of the future are with us. It is a civilization based on the marvels of modern technologies such as the silicon chip and fiber optics. It will advance into the Second Industrial Revolution, and will affect the lives of everyone in the West and therefore the world. It has already had an impact on the lives of most people in North America whether they are aware of it or not, and what has happened thus far is only a modest beginning.

We are entering the age of intelligent machinery. It is an age of computerized weaponry which will enable the wealthy governments of the world to generate weapons systems of startling sophistication and accuracy such as were demonstrated on a very small scale during the Falklands War. It will be an age of computerized toys such as the video games which are popular now, and an age of computerized tools.

One of the early results will be an explosion of information dissemination ability. Computer terminals will be as common as microwave ovens. Whole libraries of information will be available through the telephone lines to computer terminals in peoples' homes. It could be the greatest challenge to the printed word since the invention of movable type — a revolution in communications. No longer will you need to wait until 3 o'clock when the newspaper is delivered to find out today's news. You will be able to turn on your computer and access a news service and the latest news stories, some perhaps only minutes in the news service system, will appear on the screen before your eyes. The words travel at the speed of light and will offer you more information than you have ever had available to you from newspapers.

Eventually it will be possible for you to do research from your own home, calling up books to your video display terminal while you sit in the comfort of your living/computer room. The same machine which expands your mind will probably be regulating your hot water heater, acting as the thermostat for your house, turning the lights on and off when you leave home, acting as your burglar alarm, opening and closing your insulation shutters, and cooking the roast in your oven. It will be used to order groceries from the store, and when the transaction is complete, will pay for the groceries by sending an electronic check from your bank to the grocery store.

It sounds like something from a science fiction novel, but the scenario is probably much closer to being realizable than most people believe. It sounds almost too good to be true. Imagine — an automatic world where mundane tasks are attended to by an array of hardware and software. It should leave you with enough free time to become truly cultured. Now you will be able to turn your attention to the development of the arts. Finally you will have the leisure time to enjoy the ballet, brought to you live from Moscow via satellite to your big-screen television which has over 140 channels to choose from. At last you will have the time to use your mind for more constructive things, such as a fine appreciation of the opera. Perhaps you could learn another language and thus become a more balanced individual.

Sound too good to be true? It is.

The technology already exists which will do the things described above and more. Much more. American television news shows are carrying stories about the coming revolution in industry. The new industrial process is called robotization. It is revolutionizing life in our time. It is the process which is ushering in the Second Industrial Revolution.

"The Second Industrial Revolution is coming at a time of considerable global unrest and during a time in which there is not much public consciousness of the extent and seriousness of this unrest. It is coming at a time when the world market economy is in flux, when rich countries are owed more money by poor countries than the poor countries can reasonably hope to pay."

Robots. They are intelligent machines. They can be adapted to jobs on assembly lines. They can move heavy loads and can do skilled jobs in industry such as welding and metal fabrication. They can sew, paint, assemble and package. Already the American auto industry is gearing up for their use. Proponents of the robots say they will create more jobs because people will be needed to tell the robots what to do.

The American and European industrial worker is an endangered species. It is not inconceivable that within a generation, if all goes as planned, the industrial worker could be nearly extinct in the advanced industrialized countries. Vestiges of the industrial past may survive here and there, but the major industries appear to be highly automatable given that the new "smart" robots can be programmed to do machine work to excellent tolerances.

And, of course, the robots do not have the disadvantages associated with workers. They do not get tired. They do not complain. They can work 24-hours a day. They are cost effective. They do not go on strike. They can work under conditions of heat and pollution and lack of air which would kill the now-obsolete human workers. The moguls of industry are jumping for joy.

Of course, there are disadvantages. They do not buy cars or television sets or houses. They do not pay taxes. And, there is the unfortunate fact that they promise to put a lot of people out of work. Permanently. That fact is bound to cause some social discontent.

The robots will do to the American and European worker of today what the spinning mule did to the English worker at the dawn of the First Industrial Revolution. The history of that period of England's industrialization — the repression of the peasantry, the mass emigrations it caused, the poverty and human suffering — has generally been ignored.



The Industrial Revolution is seen as a time of historic prosperity and growth. There is little consciousness of the social costs and the relationship of industrialization to the rise of European colonialism which was sparked by the industrialization of such countries as England, France and Germany and, of course, the United States. The First Industrial Revolution brought enormous changes to the world.

The Second Industrial Revolution will also bring changes to the world. It is alarming that this Revolution, which de-emphasizes the human as a productive economic asset, is taking place at a time when there is extensive conflict around the world. Forty-five countries have soldiers in the field in April, 1983. We generally think of this as a time of peace because there is nothing which resembles the "world wars" of the past. Yet there are some four million soldiers under arms in conflict situations around the globe. They are shooting at one another in Indonesia, El Salvador, Angola, Iraq, India, Afghanistan, Ethiopia — the list is very long. They are fighting over natural resources, land, ideology and a host of other things including race and religion. There is good evidence to support the view that the East/West struggle is being fought in remote corners of the world by proxy armies of the super powers.

The Second Industrial Revolution is coming at a time of considerable global unrest and during a time in which there is not much public consciousness of the extent and seriousness of this unrest. It is coming at a time when the world market economy is in flux, when rich countries are owed more money by poor countries than the poor countries can reasonably hope to pay. It is coming at a time when some of the best economic minds are predicting the possible collapse of the world's monetary system. And this new revolution promises to bring great change, rapid change. It is a technological revolution which will rival the great technological revolutions of the past.

The future holds a vision of a world where machines will be the producers. Natural resources will be mined by robot miners, transported by robot-operated trains, unloaded by a robot unloading machine, refined automatically at the robotized refinery, transported by robot to the factory and manufactured by robot assemblers. From there it will be shipped by robot express to — to whom?

Who will have the money to buy what the robots produce? Possibly the former workers, now lumpen consumers, but what jobs will they have? There will be a need for technicians to create the software and to repair the robots, but already there is talk of robots which will be able to create software. And the new robots are geniuses at figuring out what is wrong with themselves and most of them have modular circuitry which can be replaced simply and easily. And, of course, the time is arriving when the robot can design circuitry which other robots will be able to execute to tolerances and in miniature at scales unimagined only a generation ago. It sounds fantastic, yet it appears to be inevitable.

And what of the Natural World. Is there any room in an age of super-mechanization for the Natural World? It is a good question, and one which people of the 1980s need to explore intensively. The Age of Robotization is upon us. It will affect all of us regardless of our ideology, and we need to know what it means to us, the the future of human cultures, and the the economies of our present world. It is less a future of promise than a future of threatening visions for both the peoples of the industrial world and for the Third World which will play an increasingly demeaning role in the economic life of a robotized future.

— John Mohawk

INDIAN LAND CLAIM "GAMES" IN NORTHERN MINNESOTA

"...No I don't remember selling my land, I still had my land in 1936. They said I sold my land in 1936... The same way with my mother. Somebody sold my mother's land. I don't even know who... No I never sold nothing. I was as poor as a 'church mouse' at that time... That's true! What I am telling you, I still got my mind real good! I remember it all the time! It comes to me when I sleep how much people beat us. We wouldn't have been so doggone poor as we were, when we were. But we were about the poorest people that ever lived..."

— Maggie Hanks, White Earth Reservation

By Winona LaDuke (c) 1982

From 1887 to 1934, the Indian land base (the so-called "as long as the grass shall grow" reservations) was reduced by U.S. government policies from 166 to 52 million acres. On the White Earth reservation in northern Minnesota, 80 percent of what had been reservation land was lost in a twenty year period — one of the most severe cases of "land alienation" in US-Indian History.

These days, "Indian land claims" are becoming relatively infamous, in both the Indian and non-Indian community. The Maine Land Claims uproar, and subsequent meagre settlement to the Pismoquoddy and Penobscot people are a prime example. But, the Pandora's box of internal reservation land claims had just been opened — and is something that both local non-Indians residents and the federal government wish would just disappear.

As the trustee to Indian people, the federal government is legally obliged to file claims and litigate on behalf of Indian land interests. Most of these claims historically fell to the guise of the now defunct Indian Claims Commission, notorious for awarding miniscule monetary settlements in exchange for title to huge land areas — averaging 47 cents per acre. These land claims, (like the Sioux "settlement" for a five state area and the Black Hills) face extinction as the federal government attempts to "finalize" the ownership issue. An entirely new set of claims, however, is now on the horizon — internal reservation claims. Dubbed 2415 Claims, since 1966, the number of investigations has been growing, but the number of actual cases, remains small. The consequences, are that the federal government has had to extend the statute of limitations for the 2415 cases at each subsequent deadline, in 1972, 1977, and in 1980. And, now as the "final deadline" approaches — little, if anything, has been done. Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs, William Cohen, has proposed Senate Bill 2978 — eliminating the Statute of Limitations until one year after the federal government has notified all reservations and Indian individuals of all potential

claims. Without some sort of extension, the federal government ultimately faces innumerable lawsuits for breaching trusteeship status with Indian people.

The initial focus of 2415 claims cases were on White Earth, and have now spread to 40 reservations in 16 states. By mid-1982, over 100,000 acres of land on the reservations were in question by the 2415 project team, representing only a small dent in the investigation. An additional 90,000 acres were taken out of the White Earth Reservation when four townships were questionably "ceded." And, finally, three counties — Becker, Clearwater, and Mahnomen, which were carved out of the reservation just after the turn of the century, now face legal questions about their right to exist.

The culmination of these circumstances enhances the veritable level of hysteria in the resort and timber rich area. After the first title investigation, notices went out and local landowners found their land had a severely depressed value — caused by lack of clear title. Farmers found it impossible to receive loans and sell land, and the FOR SALE signs still seem unending and unrequited. Bankers, resort owners, and real estate agents follow the developments with a magnifying glass as the local papers uncover the magnitude of the problem. At one point this year, a local paper ran detailed maps of four heavily affected townships overlaying current "owners" with questioned land. Every copy of the paper was sold.

Some of the prominent local land owners have formed the United Townships Association (U.T.A.) made up of constituents from the three county area who are committed to combatting the red economic threat to local property rights. Bob Bruns, a resort owner on White Earth, and head of the U.T.A., says the intention of the association is to "resolve a conflict between groups currently in disagreement. And, the U.T.A. has proposed solutions, aided by two local congressmen (Arlan Strangeland and Dave Durenburger) and Tom Tobin, a South Dakota lawyer who specializes in Indian lawsuits". Thus far, two solutions appear: 1) a bill to clear title to the land, and compensate (at \$5-6 million) Indian heirs and 2) "disestablishment of the reservation". The White Earth reservation Business Committee (tribal government) has spoken out strongly against both. The first is deemed unacceptable largely because the reservation and Indian heirs would lose all title to the land with minor compensation; and the second is thought outrageous, as the reservation would be eliminated entirely — a completely illegal act.

Meanwhile, at a local Republican convention, a resolution was passed concerning the Indian

population. The convention proposed, "assigning Indians the full responsibility and citizenship of non-Indians. This would eliminate treaty rights to Indians, eliminate trust land, give non-tribal government jurisdiction over tribal government, and prohibit the use of public funds based on race." "It's a funny thing," said Jamie Gonzalez, a young White Earth Indian, "almost everywhere else people act like they like Indians, and even support our treaty rights — here they still want to kill us."

Amidst the chaos, there are some beneficiaries. For example, lawyer Tom Tobin's expertise in "Indian lawsuits" not only netted him work in "Indian problem ridden" South Dakota, but also in collecting a hefty amount representing the northern Minnesota counties. A Becker county commissioner once suggested, "a cap on how much we'll pay him", but was met with great opposition by the U.T.A., who said that putting a ceiling on legal costs was "foolish". At last word, Becker county commissioner were fuming, "the charges are exorbitant and nothing is getting settled." In the meantime however, Becker county alone has paid the Tobin firm some \$80,000 for two years for extensive work.

Finally, there is the issue who actually claims ownership of the reservation. The Indians both individually and through the tribal government, own approximately 50,000 acres. The federal government 45,470 acres, the state 46,937 acres, and three counties — Becker, Clearwater and Mahnomen — 116,500 acres. An additional 10,000 acres is claimed by three large private landowners, including the Boy Scouts of America. As Vernon Bellecourt, former Secretary Treasurer of the reservation notes, "They (the state, counties) wouldn't really lose that much in returning that land. With no property owners on it, they can't even use it as a tax base. And, as for the Boy Scouts, maybe they could have summer camp somewhere else, or at least pay rent."

In Washington, there's a question as to whether the wheels grind at all. The fact that the 2425 Land Claims investigation and any pending lawsuits are prohibited from filing a claim against any federal land, or land owned by any "officer" of the federal government is a significant impediment on White Earth and all other reservations. Additionally, of the 1,308 cases submitted by the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe 2415 Claims Division to the Department of Interior, 282 were immediately rejected, with 1,026 remaining as possible cases. So far, the Department of Justice has just 170 of those cases in the file from White Earth, and all are still waiting action.

Back on the reservation, the pressure cooker is still on, but the local Indian attitude about land claims is, not surprisingly, "we'll believe it when we see it." And for some 23,000 landless White Earth enrollees, any sight of land appears to be a flashlight at the end of a very long tunnel.



SLAVE RIVER DAM — ANOTHER JAMES BAY?

The Dene Nation is expressing grave concern over two issues of major importance which threaten the land and continued existence of the Dene as a people at this time. Both, it feels, are a direct attack on the Aboriginal Rights of the Dene to their land, their resources and the control over their own lives which they seek to maintain.

One issue is the land leases which are currently being renegotiated between the government of Canada and a number of oil companies with NO Dene participation whatsoever. These leases give to the oil companies rights to huge areas of the Dene homeland -land which is at this time the focus of ongoing aboriginal rights negotiations between the Dene and the federal government.

The other issue is a proposed hydroelectric Dam or series of Dams on the Slave River near British Columbia. These projects would have a major impact on the land and people of the whole Mackenzie River Valley, an area that is one-fifth the size of Canada.

The Dene say "In order to survive we need our land".

LEASES ON OUR LAND — THE DENE MUST HAVE INPUT

The Dene Nation learned by accident that the government of Canada is in the process of renegotiating a large number of leases with oil companies, giving these companies the right to explore, drill, and exploit Dene land and resources. No attempt was being made to involve the Dene in these transactions on any level, even though the Dene are currently negotiating their Aboriginal Rights to these same lands with the federal government.

The Dene Nation is an organization representing approximately 15,000 descendants of the Dene and 26 communities of the Mackenzie Valley in the north-central part of Canada.

(Yukon Indian News)

The following is from an interview between Newsletter Editor M. Helene Laraque and Francois Paulette, a member of the Slave River Basin Coalition of Fort Smith.

Newsletter: Could you tell us about the Coalition and why it was formed?

Francois: The Slave River Basin Coalition began in September. It's a group of people that are concerned about the proposed hydro development on the Slave River in Fort Smith. And it's a coalition that's been talked about for some time. It's not only the Dene people that are concerned about the river or about the land or the natural way of looking at the earth. There are non-Native people that are equally concerned about the land. For these reasons, the coalition was formed so we're addressing the whole issue of the dam.

Newsletter: What will be some of the effects that the proposed dam would have on the land, the way of life of the people in Fort Smith and in the south Slave region?

Francois: The effect is going to be enormous. We cannot measure something like this. We can only look at the rest of the world and what has happened.

Narrowing it down to Smith, the Slave River and more so the Mackenzie River — the effect is going to be devastating, not only to the fish in the river, Great Slave Lake; there's all the wildlife that people have to be concerned with and the way of life that has sustained us for centuries. The beaver, the muskrat; you can name countless other species of birds and animals that will be affected, the pelicans on the Slave River that migrate there each year.

There would be the overall change in the social impacts on the people. We've also talked about the buffalo in Wood Buffalo National Park that people have used for centuries. We lived side by side. We cannot segregate ourselves from nature — the people and the land are one.

"We have already felt the effects of development"

I heard from elders that in the past when it was very cold winters, the ice got very, very thick and a lot of snow those days, the ice used to stop just upstream of Fort Smith and the Hay Camp area. There are a couple of little small rivers and creeks that run into the Slave River. I've heard elders say that sometimes when ice was stopped there that the water backed up and ran into those rivers and eventually there was a river created, that went into the Salt River and down through the other way. It affected the buffalo. I saw it when I was young.

If the land is flooded in that area, there will be hundreds of buffalo drowned — buffalo floating in the river.

I don't know how people can really justify something of that magnitude and continue to look at the land as if it is in the cause of energy and cheap power. That's totally absurd, at least for Fort Smith, because we've already been

affected by one small dam just out of Smith, that's the Taltson River dam. The people don't really look at history. Even when that dam was built we were told that we're going to be given cheap power and we haven't got cheap power at all. It's ironic.

Newsletter: What about the argument that a dam like this going to bring in jobs and financial benefits to the town?

Francois: People have really been colonized. A lot of people have adopted a way that is foreign to us. We the native people have really contributed a lot of our efforts to making small business viable from the beginning. Some people say now we're going to get a lot of money from it. There's going to be a lot of jobs created.

It's ridiculous to say well, we're going to get all the jobs. The native people in Smith — the ones that you see on the streets that have been drowned by alcohol and drowned by a different system,



totally foreign to their way of life — we expect that these people are going to get jobs?

There's been Pine Point Mines that's been established — that's closing down. So, it's a short term benefit for perhaps a long history of disaster, for the cause of development — for short term jobs.

Just to go back and look at the people that moved from Fort Fitzgerald to Fort Smith, we look at that as perhaps history but also we have to look at it as a total devastating move to our people that were once very, very self-reliant and very self-sufficient in many, many ways. Those are the same people that you see in Smith, that have no jobs, that are on welfare, they're drunks, the social impact on them is enormous.

the Department of Indian Affairs decided they were going to move the people from Fitz to Smith. And the argument that they used was that we are too far from the schools, we're too far from the Hudson Bay (store), we are too far from welfare offices, we're too far from the liquor store.

The government was going to offer us good homes in Fort Smith, provide us with running water, electricity, the works. I remember the whole move and my father accepted that move. People just abandoned their homes in Fitz. Some were burned down, some were taken apart. The people have lost a lot from that move.

Newsletter: How does your father and those people of his generation who went

people killing themselves, there's been very serious crimes that have happened through alcohol and people are really questioning that.

People that have perhaps moved themselves to be leaders, to be in effect working for governments, are not really questioning all that. They're comfortable, they're secure. They're secure with their way of life.

Newsletter: What about the rights of those people, of the Dene people that were moved to Smith, did the government ever come through with the promises that they had given to the people as reasons to move them?

Francois: As I said, when we moved the government promised us good homes with running water and we moved to Smith. I remember my father really struggling with finishing off the house, painting it. There was no lights, there was no running water and there was no promise of any form of compensation, of a settlement because when the treaties were signed, there was no questions about land. Though there was a time when the government did come back and tried to settle treaties in terms of reserves and the people outrightly just said no. So, there's that whole question of ownership through Aboriginal Rights.

I don't think it would be good to go back to the government and say, "Where is our promise? Where is our compensation for being here?" I think what we really should question is for the people that have moved from Fitzgerald, that are now living in Fort Smith — is for us to make that move, to go back to Fort Fitzgerald and begin to establish a community that is going to be self-reliant. Then, make a home that is going to be ours because it is our right to move back there. There is no question about that.

Newsletter: This is the land that will most likely be flooded if the dam goes through, right?

Francois: My ancestors are buried there, my fore-fathers, my whole history is there. I would rather be flooded with my ancestors, for that is where I come from. People should begin to make that stand.

Newsletter: Do you think that this issue of the proposed dam right now in terms of the work that the coalition is doing, is this issue dividing or uniting the people in Fort Smith?

Francois: It's a question I guess, of a belief, of a principle. The coalition in many ways is bringing both non-Dene and native people together, not just to look at and fight the dam



and draw a campaign against the dam but people that are concerned about the community politically. We share the same community, we have a common struggle. When we got the coalition together, (there were people there I've never sat with before) we realized that we have a common ground and I think the kind of work that I've been doing a lot of people were doing in terms of the recognition of a Dene struggle. Struggling with the development, struggling with government, struggling with everything. I think a lot of these people are beginning to realize their own personal integrity, their own personal self-determination, that they are also in the same struggle. And I think the dam and the coalition is just putting people together in that way.

Newsletter: What are these basic issues that you're talking about, that people are dealing with?

Francois: The basic issue is that environmentally the dam is going to destroy the land. People are concerned about the social impact on Fort Smith. People have already seen the kind of suicides, alcoholism, the killings — they see that, that's a very basic thing that we have to be concerned with.

People enjoy the river, people like to see the river and the land, the way it is.



"Rapids of a drowned Slave River." - N.W.T.

FORT FITZGERALD

Newsletter: Would you back track a little bit and tell us what life was like in Fort Fitzgerald and how the people of Fort Fitzgerald came to be in Fort Smith?

Francois: Fitzgerald, where I come from, was at one time a community of solely Dene people. It's a very historical part of the North. The people there as I said, we're very self-reliant, self-sufficient in their way of life. They lived off the land. There was a cohesiveness between families. There was no alcohol. People laughed. There were drum dances I remember. The pace was very quiet. The people gathered food through the seasons. Though there was no schools, there was no TV, there was no liquor store, there was no welfare.

My father was the chief at that time, and for some unknown reason,

through that, how do they feel about life in Fort Smith and big developments like the dam coming in now?

Francois: Well, I think they are putting the picture together, that it was a plot, that there was a plan to remove people from Fitz so it can make way for a dam. There were studies made to build a dam even in the '50s. And there's been numerous studies. Some of the people that lived in Fitz were doing surveys — they didn't know what they were surveying for. It's becoming apparent that they were moving us so they could make way for an eventual dam. My father sees that very clearly, and my father regrets very much accepting that move.

Talking to older people that come from Fitz they are also questioning why has that happened. We have nothing in Smith. We are dying on alcohol, or alcoholism. There are

INDIANS AND RANCHERS IN BRAZIL

The area between the Colonia (or Cachoeira) and Pardo rivers, in the municipalities of Itaju do Colonia, Pau-Brasil and Camaca, has always been occupied by the Pataxo-Hahahai and Baena Indians, from the time of the earliest records of the region (1610) down to the present.

The advance of the national society in this southern area of the state of Bahia led to continual reductions in the area previously inhabited by the Indians, until at the beginning of this century they were concentrated in the region of the present reservation of Caramuru-Paraguacu. This reservation was created by the Executive branch of the State government of Bahia, State Law number 1916, on August 9, 1926, based on the fact that the largest demographic concentrations of Indians in conditions of isolation in the State were located in that region. This is explicitly recognized in the text of the Decree of March 9, 1926, issued by this same Executive.

"Attraction posts" were established by Capt. Vicente de Paula Vasconcelos, then serving in the Indian Protection Service. Other administrators completed the work of "attraction," administering the reserve and carrying out many improvements, such as the clearing and planting of gardens, with Federal resources and the labor of the Indians living on the reservation.

In 1936 the ranchers and landowners of the region established a policy of taking over the Indian lands, and succeeded in forcing an agreement to this effect between the Indian Protection Service and the State Government of Bahia. According to this agreement (no. 1471 of May, 1937), drawn up in a public hearing at the Indian Post of Caramuru, the area of the reservation was reduced, in conformity with the interests of the ranchers. The state government financed the new survey, which redefined the boundaries of the reservation. This survey was carried out by Capt. Moyses Castello Branco and by the engineer Alfredo Amorim Coelho, representing the Dept. of Agriculture, Industry, Commerce, Transportation and Public Works of Bahia.

The ethnologist Curt Nimuendaju, in 1938, arranged the transfer to the reservation of survivors of other indigenous groups, who had previously inhabited the region and who were without protection against the persecution of the landholders of the area. Small groups of Botocudo, Kamaka, Tupiniquim, Menian and Kiriri-Sapuya were in this way moved to the reserve. These groups were located at the Paraguacu Indian Post, while the Pataxo-Hahahai and Baena were located at the Caramuru Indian Post, in the north of the reserve. For this reason, this was divided into two posts within the same continuous area.

In accordance with the Indian policy of the period, the Indian Protection Service set up leasing contracts with non-Indians for the exploitation of floral resources and for agriculture on reservation lands. These contracts expressly forbade the installation of permanent improvements by the contractors, and defined any such improvements as violations of contract.

These leasing contracts were essentially conceived and defined to yield an income sufficient to defray the expenses of the assistance being rendered to the Indians. In a number of ways, however, these purposes and limitations were circumvented, permitting the virtually total invasion of the reservation by the ranchers: the corruption of SPI personnel, threats against the Indians and non-Indians prohibited by the terms of the

Land-grab causes relocation, threats of massacre

contracts and by law. The ranchers made a number of attempts to have the State government of Bahia seize the Indian lands and expel the Indians. These efforts, however, remained unsuccessful.

The loss of reservation land, however, forced many of the Indians to abandon the reservation and take refuge on other Indian posts. Others nevertheless remained in the area, subsisting as paid laborers for the ranchers or salaried workers in private enterprises or public services. The area was thus never completely abandoned by its legitimate owners.

Owing to the almost total occupation of the reservation by ranchers and the dispersion of many of the Indians who had lived there to other areas, the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI, the successor of the SPI after 1967) deactivated the Post in 1972, and from that time ceased to charge rents to the leaseholders. In 1976, the ranchers once again demanded that the land be turned over to them. This movement resulted in a new survey of the situation with regard to the occupation of the area. FUNAI resolved to survey and demarcate the Indian lands once again in order to guarantee the survival of the Indians living on them. In spite of this attitude of the Federal Agency concerned, however, the State Government of Bahia illegally distributed titles to the land to the ranchers. In 1977 bids were invited for work of demarcation by announcements published in the newspapers of the State capital and posted in the government offices of the municipalities in which the Indian lands were located. The Plantel surveying firm was contracted for the job (Service Order no. 03/79). In spite of the new demarcation entailing a new reduction in the area of the reservation, the ranchers prevented its being carried out by threatening the lives of the surveyors.

In 1982, the Indians from the reservation who had been living as refugees on the Guarani Ranch in the neighboring State of Minas Gerais decided to return to their own lands, not having adapted satisfactorily to their new circumstances. FUNAI, in its legal role as ward and protector of the Indians, sought the protection of the Federal Police and accompanied the Indians when they reoccupied the ranch of Sao Lucas, which the Federal authorities had refused to register as the legal property of the leaseholder on the grounds of its being entirely inside Indian lands. From that time on, a series of violent pressures has been brought to bear on various authorities directly or indirectly concerned with the problem, with the aim of achieving the expulsion of the Indians. FUNAI, having exhausted all possibilities of a negotiated solution without success, finally resorted to bringing suit in Federal Court (case no. 030668).

Various sites were considered for the relocation of the Indians. All of these were remote and inaccessible areas without the minimal conditions or resources to permit subsistence. The governor of the State alleged that if the Indians were not removed, the government party would lose the election (of Nov. 1982) because of the withdrawal of the support of the ranchers. Unable to go on resisting these pressures, FUNAI had to remove part of the Indian population of Sao Lucas to the Experimental Station of Almada, an area of 108 hectares devoted to experiments in pisciculture. Part of

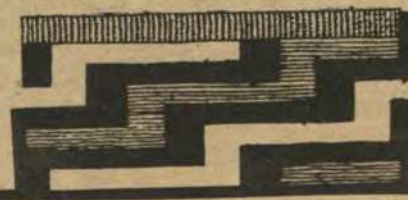
the Indian population, however, continued to resist removal, and in spite of all of the pressures brought to bear on them, remained on the ranch. These pressures included the cutting off of food supplies, the suspension of medical assistance and financial resources, and the removal of Federal Police protection, rendering them vulnerable to attacks by the ranchers.

At the beginning of November 1982, the Indians who had remained at Sao Lucas got a lawyer and brought suit in court, demanding a restraining order against the carrying out of the decision to relocate them, given that this decision did not conform to the legal requirement of a decree by the President of the Republic ordering their removal to prevent "social disturbance." A federal judge found in favor of the Indians, and issued a show-cause order restraining further transferences and ordering the return of the Indians already transferred to their original lands. This decision provoked great agitation and anticipation among the Indians at Almada, who immediately began preparing to return to Sao Lucas. The government of the State of Bahia, however, immediately went to court and got the judge's order set aside. This was not immediately communicated to the Indians.

The death of an Indian child, and the decision to bury her in the ancestral territory touched off the following chain of events. The Indians, not having been informed of the judicial order setting aside the earlier decision allowing them to return, decided that they would all go back to Sao Lucas. A group of armed ranchers prepared to meet and kill them upon arrival. The move was, however, successfully made at dawn by means of trucks with headlights turned off.

FUNAI applied in Federal court in the State capital, Salvador, for an order interdicting the area of the Sao Lucas Ranch where the Indians would then remain until a decision was reached on the legal question of possession of the land. The judge involved, considering that he lacked sufficient facts, decided to make a tour of inspection of the area, accompanied by interested parties and by an expert consultant (an anthropologist). The judicial party was received by more than 500 armed men, who threatened and attempted to pressure the investigatory commission so that the judge would not rule that the Indians might remain at Sao Lucas while the justice of their demands to retain their lands is being decided.

FUNAI is now once under enormous pressure to remove the Indians from the ranch of Sao Lucas, in order to satisfy the interests of the ranchers. The armed ranchers and their men are threatening at any moment to invade the area where the Indians have taken refuge, under the protection of the Federal police. The situation is critical, and the lives of the Indians are in danger. It is also possible that FUNAI will not succeed in resisting the pressures being brought to bear by the State government and will try once more to remove the Indians, which would now have to be achieved by force and by violence, since they are determined to resist. This would represent, not only one more violation of the rights of these Indians, but under present conditions would risk precipitating a massacre.



Tribal Filipinos Face Violent Removal From Land Base

Logging, Agri-business Spearhead Genocide



Tribal Land: Fuel for Corporate Development

The acceleration of logging, agribusiness and mining that has occurred in the past decade has deprived many tribal Filipinos of their land and livelihood. The Philippine government has used its claim over "public land" to integrate tribal areas into the export-oriented economy.

Logging is one activity that has proved extremely profitable in the Philippines. In 1979, forest products were one of the country's top export earners. Government development plans envision the "logging off" of all remaining forest—where the vast majority of the country's minority peoples live and farm—within the next 15 years. "Conservation" plans consist largely of controlling tribal farmers, not the logging companies; 400,000 families, approximately 2.4 million people, are to be moved and evidently employed as wage laborers on land cultivated by agribusiness corporations.

The Cellophil Resources Corporation, a logging company operating in the Abra province of northern Luzon, is a classic example of this process. Thousands of Tingguian people have lost lands included in the company's 200,000 hectare concession. The company's pulp and paper mill is rapidly destroying fishing, one of the Tingguians' main alternative sources of livelihood. The Tingguians, Kalingas, and others who dwell in the forested concession also face the loss of pasturelands for their water buffalo and the increased likelihood of erosion, landslides and floods. Cellophil has banned the cutting of trees for timber and discouraged the collecting of wood for fuel and rattan for handicrafts. Yet popular opposition to Cellophil has brought military harassment. Members of the tribal community have been arrested arbitrarily and detained without trial.

The encroachment of local and multinational agribusiness has produced a similar situation on the southern island of Mindanao, where the largest number of tribal Filipinos are located.

In the central Mindanao province of Bukidnon, the best known case of agribusiness landgrabbing is that of Del Monte Corporation's Philippine subsidiary, the Philippine Packing Corporation (Philpak). Established in 1926, Philpak steadily grew until by the 1970s it had become the largest food company in the Philippines and the top exporter of bananas and pineapples, two of the country's top ten foreign exchange earners. Encouraged by the Marcos regime's development priorities, Philpak decided to attempt to acquire 14,000 hectares owned largely by native Bukidnon. With the help of PANAMIN and Philippine troops, Philpak has now acquired more than half of this land. As in Luzon, resistance of native Mindanaoans to eviction has often been met with violence.

Poverty is the eventual result of corporate encroachment. Manobo people evicted from land taken by the Bukidnon Sugar Corporation (BUSCO) were finally relocated to an over-crowded PANAMIN reservation where they were forced to grow sugar for BUSCO. Others have settled for impoverished lives as plantation workers on their former tribal land.

Indigenous people in the Philippines—called "tribal Filipinos" to distinguish them from the Philippine majority, which also descended from native peoples—include more than 4 million people, more than 40 ethnolinguistic groups, and over 12 percent of the national population. Many have retained a high degree of cultural, political and economic independence, often because they withdrew to isolated mountain areas to avoid Spanish and then US colonial domination. Most tribal Filipinos subsist from *kaingin* or slash-and-burn farming; a sizeable number in northern Luzon have carved their steep mountain slopes into irrigated rice terraces.

Although tribal Filipinos have experienced the steady encroachment of land-hungry settlers and companies for over a century, the situation in the 1970s became especially intense and today threatens their survival as peoples. The land frontier had become exhausted in the mid-1960s; communities could no longer withdraw into further isolation. More significant, when martial law was declared in 1972, the regime of Ferdinand Marcos ushered in a new era of foreign-dominated and export-oriented development for the Philippines. Since they occupy areas rich with natural resources, tribal Filipinos are besieged by a growing number of corporations engaged in mining, logging, agribusiness and other export industries. To support these industries, the government is rushing the construction of massive dams and other infrastructure projects in ancestral areas. The military has moved in to relocate tribal Filipinos from the affected areas, to divide communities against one another, and to prevent their joining a growing national resistance.

The Invasion of PANAMIN

Much of the Philippine law affecting tribal minorities is a legacy of colonial law formulated to facilitate economic exploitation after the US takeover in 1901. Laws passed during the years of American rule granted private land titles to large owners, placed all undeclared land under state ownership, opened such land to "exploration, occupation and purchase by citizens of the United States and the Philippines," and banned traditional tribal use of huge areas covered by mining and logging concessions, public parks, forest reserves and other lands sold by the Philippine government to settlers or corporations. Much of this colonial law has been restated by the Marcos regime.

Government decisions regarding tribal Filipinos are enforced by the official agency known as PANAMIN (Presidential Assistant on National Minorities). Originally an effort to help tribal

Filipinos, it is now the Marcos regime's primary instrument to move tribal Filipinos off their lands. Many PANAMIN board members are also directors of the companies encroaching on tribal lands. "Security" and relocation are the two most essential elements in PANAMIN's program. According to one leading army officer within the agency, "The purpose of PANAMIN is to check on the loyalty of national minorities. . . . Those minorities who pass our loyalty check are permitted to participate in the government's fight against subversive elements." The agency's enormous security budget is especially devoted to arming tribal communities against each other.

Relocation of tribal Filipinos to PANAMIN reservations is tied in with the agency's military role. The reservations are virtual armed camps, with guards and checkpoints and controlled entry and exit. The relocation tribal people—at least 2.5 million, PANAMIN claims—have found economic survival in the cramped, alien camps to be near impossible, while sickness and starvation are common. Aside from its military role, in fact, most of PANAMIN's attention has focused on enforcing "primitivism" on the reservations—refusing to provide even the simplest technologies necessary for the tribal people to be self-sufficient. The Marcos government hopes that by appearing "primitive," tribal Filipinos will become popular tourist attractions.



PHILIPPINE



The Dams are Running After Us!

To attract the investment it desires, the Philippine government has made the development of hydroelectricity the foundation of its development program. With more than half its costs covered by loans from major development banks, the government plans to build at least 40 major dams during the next 20 years. Almost all the dams are planned for lands occupied by minorities, and as they will be built in wide valleys in otherwise mountainous regions, they threaten to submerge the best farm land of the affected communities. The watersheds of most of the country's major rivers, and the homes of more than 1.5 million people, may be affected.

The relationship of hydroelectric development to corporate expansion onto tribal Filipino land is exemplified by one of the first projects, the \$70 million Pantabangan dam in the province of Nueva Ecija (Luzon). When authorized in 1969, the dam was the largest infrastructure project in the Philippines and the third largest in Asia. A joint project of the Philippine government and the US Agency for International Development, Pantabangan was partially funded by a \$34 million construction loan from the World Bank.

More than 9,000 people from the town of Pantabangan were displaced when their farmlands were flooded by the dam. Previously one of the highest in the country, the food production of the resettled villagers sharply declined. Their new land is poor, while the people have only squatters rights and thus see little interest in improving the land.

In displacing the villagers, the dam left them vulnerable to further exploitation. The National Irrigation Administration and the World Bank agreed in 1980 to establish a large agro-forestry project in the resettlement area. The people of Pantabangan fear this project; they know that it means the government will not recognize their petitions for ownership and cultivation rights to the land. Instead, the government wants to incorporate them into another "development" scheme—this time as laborers producing commercial crops.

A hydroelectric project to be built 25 kilometers from Manila in Luzon reveals a similar, if varied, process of exploitation. Funded partially by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, Kaliwa-Kanan will submerge 29,000 out of 50,000 hectares occupied by the Dumagat-Remontado people and non-native settlers. The government is now attempting to relocate seven barrios, containing 450 native families, claiming that the areas will be flooded by 1985.



The Canadian Constitution Con't from page 19

and (this time around) by the descendants of all life forms on Earth. A sovereign people are self-reliant and self-sufficient. They nourish, clothe, and care for each other without aid from an external government.

Sovereignty is economic, social, and spiritual self-reliance and self-sufficiency. When a people can hold themselves up in these ways, then they are truly sovereign. The demand for sovereignty, then, is a demand for the right and the ability to be self-reliant and self-sufficient. When directed at Canada, it is a demand that Canada stop interfering in the Native peoples' rights to the things necessary to achieve these things. In the final analysis, sovereignty is forged 99 percent by one's own hand. The other 1 percent represents efforts to organize a collective guidance of purpose toward spiritual maturity.

A sovereign people cannot bargain with foreign governments on behalf of anyone other than themselves, because sovereignty is a power that carries the conscience of human responsibility to our Creator to practice the democratic principles of traditions such as the Great Law founded by our Iroquoian predecessors; that which is the principle of Unity Through Diversity.

So, if it is sovereignty you seek, don't go looking for it in Ottawa or Washington D.C., because sovereignty is not theirs to give (Pierre said no anyway). A people are sovereign by virtue of a self-reliance and self-sufficiency which enables them to perpetuate themselves biologically, politically, and spiritually. For Indigenous Peoples in Canada, sovereignty will not come with the stroke of a pen in Britain, but through work and struggle and a resocialization process which has barely begun to be conceived, much less practiced. If all you seek is a piece of the Canadian Pie, that is your choice and your choice alone. It is a human right to choose one's own course in life, but not in the name of anyone other than yourself. Your decision cannot concern or affect sovereign Indigenous nations such as the Iroquois Confederacy. We are not aborigines. We are united nations. We are Mohawk, Onondaga, Seneca, Oneida, Cayuga, and Tuscarora. We are united nations of people, a bit worse for the wear and tear of past centuries, but we are still here, still sovereign, and still a Confederacy which can only grow in power as Canada begins to tighten its grip. What happens in Ottawa carries no reference or relevance to our assertion that we are sovereign nations because we understand that sovereignty comes with the territory. Sovereignty is free for the taking... if you have what it takes to take it and keep it...

Thus, it was not by co-incidence that there was a conspicuous absence of Grassroots Indigenous Peoples at the Conference of First Ministers held on March 15, 1983. This time, we did not go for the bait. This leaves Canada with two choices. She will treat with Indigenous Peoples as sovereign nations now or clash with at least a faction of Indian people in the lean years to come. The question before us now is in the position that Canada chooses to take in dealing with sovereign Indigenous nations. If Canada chooses to bulldoze its way through sovereign territories, with the signatures of non-representative aborigines as its justification and rationale, it must be prepared to pay the price. In all periods of history people have responded to threats to their continued existence as distinct peoples. The results have often been dramatic but they have always been traumatic. Think of any time and place in history when these kinds of denials of



"What happens in Ottawa carries no reference or relevance to our assertion that we are sovereign nations... Sovereignty is free for the taking... if you have what it takes to take it and keep it."

peoples rights have occurred and you will find conflict resulted. There is no reason to think that conflicts will not continue between Canada and the Native peoples. There is a second choice. Canada can recognize and respect the sovereignty of its Indigenous Peoples and become a world leader for human rights with a goal to world peace. Let us each recognize one another's basic human rights to exist and thrive in our cultural diversity. If we do this simple thing, we shall be united the world over, stronger for our differences and free in body, mind, and spirit to become what our Creator intends us to be. Creation's temples of God.

..rokwaho..

NATIVE CHILD

Now is the time to plant - and to teach



PHOTO CREDIT: Claus Biegert

This article is intended for anyone who ever sat around with a cup of coffee and friends talking at what's wrong with kids and what they need.

Young people need to know about life, right? Right. And there's an easy way for them to begin. You don't even have to teach them; they'll learn from a teacher far greater than any of us. That teacher is the Earth itself. The subject: growing a garden.

We all know how much our Anishinabe children like puppies. Seeds

for a garden will teach and give all the joy a puppy can, and seeds don't wet on the floor.

Here's the recipe for letting the Earth teach your child to love and care for each other and others. Get some seeds.

Turn some earth in a sunny place. Offer a prayer with your children at your garden sight.

Plant the seeds.

Help the child to see his seed puppy's head peek through the ground.

Help the child to keep bugs and weeds away from his little earth friends.

Talk to the young plants and touch them lovingly, and the Earth Mother will do the rest.

The garden can be an exciting and ever changing place where the active involvement of children is rewarding for all. It is a good place for a child to learn the natural cycles and the inter-relationship of life and gives him a place to regularly have active contact with the forces of life while producing his own food.

In addition to involving children's efforts in family gardens, school gardens are excellent learning experiences.

Although it is sometimes hard to convince school administrators that learning can take place outside the hallowed halls of the classroom, gardens have been a successful part of many school curriculums for most of this century. The number is growing rapidly.

Gardens should be especially important and integral parts of the curriculum for

the many survival schools springing up over the country. Knowing how to grow food is the most basic lesson for survival of self-reliant communities and sovereign tribes.

The best resource for working in the garden is you. But have patience, give some attention and time to the questions as they arise. Following these few simple rules will assist children in developing their keen sense of observation. Our Mother Earth is, of course, the best of all teachers. You, like the stem of the calumet, are the union of the child and the Creator. The Earth is the bowl where you refill the Earth "pipe" with a seed and prayer and light the flame of plant life with water. Then it's the sun's turn.

I know. You're going to tell me you don't know how to grow anything. You don't have to have a "green thumb." Neither does our Mother Earth, but she knows when and where to plant things, and there are many friends around to help you and your child discover life. Some bugs, birds and other plants can make your gardening job easy, like they did for our ancestors.

So get some seeds and get started.



(by Bill Church, director of Indian Education, Sault area public schools.)

BOOK REVIEW

THE LEGEND OF FOOD MOUNTAIN, adapted by Harriet Rohmer, illustrated by Graciela Carrillo. 24 pp., 9X9, hard-cover. 24 full-page color illustrations, English and Spanish, all ages. \$8.95. Published by Children's Book Press/Imprenta De Libros Infantiles, 1461 Ninth Ave. San Francisco, CA 94122.

Each Native Peoples of the world have oral legends of their beginnings.

THE LEGEND OF FOOD MOUNTAIN shares with young people the story of the gift of food and the creation of human beings by Guezelcoatl. FOOD MOUNTAIN shares the complex interdependence of the Creator, earth, food, lightning, rain, and human beings. In this story we learn to be thankful for food, especially corn and beans, because all food is a gift from the Creator.

As the author, Harriet Rohmer states, "Most important for today's children, THE LEGEND OF FOOD MOUNTAIN reminds us that food must be respected as a part of life. It is important to understand that everything that nourishes us has been nurtured by the earth; and in return, we must make sure that the earth is cared for. In this way, the crops will continue to grow, the people and animals will continue to eat, and the great cycle of life on this planet will survive and flourish."

The Children's Book Press has published a series of children's books from many Third World countries including Puerto Rico, Chile, Nicaragua, Panama, Vietnam and many more. Each book in the series is creatively illustrated with bold colorful drawings. THE PEOPLE SHALL CONTINUE by Simon Ortiz is a Native American story. AKWESASNE NOTES highly recommends the Children's Book Press.

— Carol Cornelius Mohawk

THE WORKBOOK, published by Southwest Research and Information Center, P.O. Box 4524 Albuquerque, NM 87106.

THE WORKBOOK contains the 16 page SELF-RELIANCE magazine within the larger magazine which is loaded with resources of an alternative nature. The latest publications on environmental issues, nuclear power, consumer problems, neighborhood problems, women's issues, education and a host of other relevant issues are reviewed in each issue.

"THE WORKBOOK staff believes that war, racism, sexism, poverty, crime, and environmental destruction are all parts of the same problem. Solutions to the problem will require action on many fronts. We hope THE WORKBOOK can serve this vast, nameless movement for change." Amen.

THE WORKBOOK has effectively taken this "nameless movement" and classified it into categories, which people can identify. If you need information on agriculture you will find a review of "The Future Is Abundant: A Guide to Sustainable Agriculture," listed under agriculture.

Food-Nutrition reviews "Food First Comics: Exploding the Myth of Scarcity" and Government-Military category reviews "Freeze It! A Citizen's Guide to Reversing the Nuclear Arms Race."

The Sources of Information are indexed under the following categories: Agriculture, Business-Corporations, Consumer Affairs, Economy-Taxes, Education, Food-Nutrition, Government-Military, How To Do It, Information, Minorities-Third World, Occupational Safety, Pollution-Environment, and Work. Each of these categories offers reviews on the topic. These reviews are in-depth and, in some cases, are analytical. Each review is, in itself, well worth reading.

Each of the six issues contains an Address Update of pertinent organizations, Networking Notes, and an index. "THE WORKBOOK is a fully indexed catalog of sources of information about environmental, social, and consumer problems. It is aimed at helping people in small towns and cities across America gain access to vital information that can help them assert control over their own lives."

The 16 page SELF-RELIANCE JOURNAL focuses on one major topic in depth. The latest issue speaks of People Power in Neighborhoods with information on neighborhood organizing. The issue before this one illustrates how holidays have been turned into consumer nightmares with the true value of gift-giving having been subverted by profit-making enterprises.

THE WORKBOOK is highly recommended and should be on every movement person's reading list.

BOOK REVIEWS

HAIL! NENE KARENNA, THE HYMN by Bruce A. Burton; Security Dupont Publishing, 617 Sibley Tower Bldg., Rochester, N.Y. 14604; 292 pages; cloth, no price listed.

The historical/biographical novel has long been considered the most difficult of fiction genres to produce. This is true not so much of the industrious research for the hard accurate facts, but of the forging of those facts into a coherent yet imaginative whole, true to the mores and manners of the time and whose language, sympathies and idea that have both appeal and a relationship to a contemporary audience.

The serious historical novel is certainly in the tradition of the great epics of literature, of Homer, Virgil and certainly the plays of Shakespeare, etc.. These works were not so much based upon researched facts but upon legend and consequently those masters were not bound by facts but translated the legends into, and via, their own imaginative creativity where the historical is uncompromisingly unimportant to the art. Who really cares if there was a real Helen of Troy or King Lear. We have the artists' vision of Helen and Lear. In creating historical figures Homer created living people...who embody our motivations, our joy or sorrow, our victories or defeats. Most likely, these characters represent our needs forever. And they are good story telling.

The problems of the novelists who have attempted to create historical/biographical novels of Indian heroes such as Thomas Berger with *LITTLE BIG MAN*, Dee Brown with *CREEK MARY'S BLOOD*, th Beebe Hill with *HANTA YO*, and, yes, John G. Neilhardt with *WHEN THE TREE FLOWERED*, and the current novel under consideration, *HAIL! NENE KARENNA*, are basically in humanizing the characters portrayed through a contemporary language to meet the requirements of a contemporary need. The novels of both Brown



and Hill suffer from their author's sentimental romanticism and the deceptive approximation of humanization. This is not quite so true with either Berger... who's fiction is saved miraculously by his biting satire... Neilhardt, and Burton.

Bruce A. Burton has made a sincere and honest attempt to create a novel, the rise and success of the founding of the Iroquois League of Five Nations through the combined genius of Deganawida and Ayonwatha. He has definitely utilized the hard accurate facts known to scholarship and research. But therein the very flaw of *HAIL!* His research is commendable, but a rich imagination and a re-telling of the legend as it has come down to us is dramatically lacking... though this is not to suggest there is no

drama or conflict. Occasionally Burton allows his passion to channel his intellect and research to ferment and his wine takes a pleasant taste. The chief flaw of *HAIL!*, however, is that the novel was obviously meant for the scholar... which is not to be necessarily condemned, for surely it is legitimate to seek a segregated audience and not to be dismissed because Burton chose not to exploit his work to a mass market. This choice does impede the pleasure of reading and enjoying a good story and can obstruct the casual reader's identifying and response to a work of "fiction."

For no apparently sound reason Burton frames his story of the lawgivers, Deganawida and Ayonwatha, with the character of a "sailor of Norman-French descent," who arrives on the scene completely fluent with the language of the Huron people and a total acquaintance with customs and rites. This is very strange, indeed. Not that Europeans might not have been in that vicinity at that time trading, but that this "Norman" prolongs the story through digression and almost appears a subterfuge delaying the entrance of both the Peacemaker, Deganawida, and Ayonwatha. His adoption into the Nation, his journey off to war, his wanderings, and eventual capture by the Onondagas has certain interests and strengths, but it does seem a story for another book and not the frame-work for one such as *HAIL!* This character, Camsa Sadeguenda, is mystifying. If he were omitted the length of the book would be most short, the story thin.

The second section of *HAIL!*, "Stanza Two: Kakwitehne: Spring 1560-1570... incidentally "Stanza" suggests poetry and lyrical poetry at that and this novel is not of the Joycean Brontean lyrical tradition of fiction... deals with Camsa Sadeguenda's life as a captive in the Onondaga village where he encounters not only Atatarho, but Ayonwatha as well, and Camsa's eventual escape and return to the Hurons on Montreal Island in the St. Lawrence River.

Maurice Kenny

SHE HAD SOME HORSES

By Joy Harjo



Many words have been victims to attempt when curious minds have sought to describe the intuitive comprehension possessed by the Creative spirit. All human beings harbor a latent sense of wonder and exercise their inborn creativity in one form or another and to one degree or another. We become artists and poets, seekers and chanters, medicine people, mothers and fathers, children, and, ancestors. The Thinker evolves intellectual excellence, but it takes much practice and sacrifice to sculpt the mind of wisdom from an amoral pool of knowledge and experience without succumbing to immorality. The poet is a human being who feels the pain and the agony of life's lessons, and those who survive inner purification find their voice to speak of knowledge from the joyous threshold of wisdom. The True Masters of Creative expression are them who temper and balance their expressions with fearless voices because they are the mouths of knowledge with the wisdom to afford them fearless.

SHE HAD SOME HORSES by Joy Harjo is a collection of poems by a woman who has survived the tests of body, mind, and spirit in this world. She emerges a beautiful butterfly fearlessly from cocoon to sky and the scars of her life are displayed as patterns of beauty on colorfilled wings. I must admit that when I first read (actually I have read and re-read and am still reading *SHE HAD SOME HORSES* and shall continue to read it until I have gleaned it of the last drop of mystery)

Joy's poems I felt a little embarrassed, as if I were secretly reading her most intimate diary. I come away enriched in woman light and in love with horses.

I am compelled to recommend *SHE HAD SOME HORSES* to our readers... especially them who have not had the guidance nor the courage to touch the beauty of woman spirit. Kick down your corrals..run free..without fear..and love all the beautiful horses everywhere...

SHE HAD SOME HORSES is made aesthetically potent with the cover painting "Memories of Ruffian," by Sherman Drexler. Joy's poems of *SHE HAD SOME HORSES* have been widely published in such magazines as:

MAGAZINES: Heresies, Spawning the Medicine River, Contact II, Corn & Soup, Frontiers, Conditions, The Beloit Poetry Journal, Cedar Rock, Greenfield Review, River Styx and Midwest Alliance Newsletter. ANTHOLOGIES: Artists For Survival, Coyote's Journal, Songs from Turtle Island, Native American Literature (Twayne U.S. Authors Series) and the Woman Poet.

I have been given kind permission from Joy Harjo to reprint just a few of the poems of *SHE HAD SOME HORSES* on the back page of this issue of Akwesasne Notes...listen for the thundering of hooves...

..rokwaho..

Literary Editor for Akwesasne Notes

Thunder's Mouth Press, 242 W. 104th St. No. 5RW,
New York, NY 10025 74 pages. Paper. Price: \$6.95

BOOKS

HISTORICAL

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Students, teachers, volunteers,
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PHOTO CREDIT: Richard David

"What I see at stake here is the same thing that I see when they talk about the buffalo or the Golden Eagle or any other species of bird or animal that are on the verge of extinction. The Way of Life that our grandfathers said that we should adhere to or be in harmony with is at stake. Our language, our beliefs, and all that which makes us a people are at stake.

If we lose the control to determine our own affairs, then we lose all and we become nothing. So this is a fight not only of laws and principles, but it is a fight to survive, that we may have the spirit that makes the body mean something..."

— Sakokwenonkwass

The Akwesasne Freedom School was started by Mohawk women who were determined to control the education of their children. The idea became a reality on September 8, 1979 as the Akwesasne Freedom School opened with 63 students in attendance. The school started in a one room building, a downstairs garage and in a home of one of the grandparents. That first year was completed through the parents support, both physically at fundraising events and spiritually through their determination to succeed.

The Akwesasne Freedom School will be completing their third year of operation come June 24, 1983. The school has acquired land and a new main building has been constructed. The third year began on the new site with an enrollment of 85 students. The year has seen the parents and students encounter difficulties financially, and spiritually, but "the light has been seen through the forest."

The parents are making strides towards self-sufficiency through such projects as earth oven, a sewing shop and a green house. These projects are started and the earth oven and greenhouse will be completed by the end of April. The parents, brother, and sister of the students are busy directing their energies in completing these projects. The teachers and students are an integral part of this learning process. Students will be learning the traditional values of planting and growing one's food supplies as well as learning science, agriculture and the skills of survival. This learning experience will have far reaching affects both on the community and the students.

The Akwesasne Freedom School is an alternative to the education systems of New York State and Canada. The parents, teachers and students would like you, the readers, to know that the school is operational and very much busy with projects and looking forward to the spring season with anticipation.

The Mohawk Nation sees the Akwesasne Freedom School as an integral part of the Nation rebuilding. The students are being prepared to be the future leaders, clanmothers and faithkeepers and most importantly to be good Mohawk citizens. This preparation is necessary and will be accomplished through the Freedom School. The choice is the Mohawk parents and their involvement indicated that the right "road" has been taken.

To let the parents choose the direction of their children's future, is their natural right. The challenge will be surmounted because the Mohawk parents involved in the Akwesasne Freedom School believe in the school and are dedicated to working towards the continuance of a Nation rebuilding project.

The Akwesasne Freedom School look forward to hearing from the Notes readers. We wish you a healthy and prosperous planting season and harvest.

Niaweh
AKWESASNE FREEDOM SCHOOL
Parent Committee

* POSTERS *

- | | | | |
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and see what life we will make for
our children."



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LIMITED SUPPLY, ??????????

Many Indian nations across the United States these days are in a situation not too many people know about: that situation is the possibility of losing their rights to fresh water supplies. While most water resources east of the Mississippi are polluted with toxics too numerous to list in this note, water sources that lie or run above ground west of the Mississippi are being drained before they empty into the sea. What water lies and runs under ground is now being tapped or ruined either by sewage, uranium mining, or by run-off from radioactive tailings. The right to fresh water is a right that could or should be granted to every creature on this earth. Listed below is a partial list of Tribes who at the present time have lawsuits pending awaiting litigation on the issue of water rights on or near their territory:

- ★ IN ARIZONA: Fort McDowell, Gila River, Hopi (Little Colorado), Papago (Settlement Act— at this time before the President) Salt River, San Carlos Apache, White Mountain Apache.
- ★ IN CALIFORNIA: La Jolla, Pala, Pauma, Rincon, and San Pasqual.
- ★ IN COLORADO: Southern Ute, Ute Mountain Ute.
- ★ IN MONTANA: Blackfeet, Crow, Flathead, Fort Belknap, Fort Peck, Northern Cheyenne, Rocky Boy.
- ★ IN NEVADA: Pyramid Lake, Fallon.
- ★ IN NEW MEXICO: Jicarilla, Mescalero, Navajo (San Juan), Nambe, Pojague, San Ildefonso and Tesuque Pueblos (Aamodt), Santa Clara, San Juan, and Taos Pueblos.
- ★ IN OREGON: Klamath.
- ★ IN SOUTH DAKOTA: Standing Rock, Cheyenne River, Lower Brule, Crow Creek, Pine Ridge, Rosebud and Yankton.
- ★ IN WASHINGTON: Coville, Lummi, Spokane, Yakima.
- ★ IN WYOMING: Wind River.

RADIATION AND DISEASE

Source: THINK Article

Since the U.S. Department of Energy's Savannah River Plant in South Carolina started to produce tritium for nuclear warheads, the incidence of cancer, heart disease and infant death downriver from the plant has increased dramatically according to THINK sources.

While the state infant death rate fell by more than 50 percent between 1950 and 1980, the rate for Allendale County, the county closest to the plant, rose to 39.8 percent per thousand births, two and a half times the state average of 15.6. Farther southwest along the Savannah River, Hampton and Jasper counties had infant death rates of 32 and 29.2 respectively in 1980, double the state average.

Directly across the Savannah River from the plant, Georgia's Burke County experienced a five fold increase in its cancer rate between 1950 and 1980 and in Screven County heart disease increased five fold during the same period of time.

NEW SOLAR BREEDER

The first photovoltaic "solar breeder" in the world was recently started up in Fredrick, Maryland. The solar panel manufacturing facility, operated by the Solarex Corporation, uses only the power provided by the solar cells mounted on its roof. The breeders' photovoltaic panels cover 28,000 square feet on a slope 40 degrees southern roof of the building. The breeder has no connections to any electric utility. Solarex officials say that the cells generate enough electricity to run the manufacturing operations, as well as all its office needs for lights and typewriters. Heat is stored in batteries that can provide power for four consecutive days without sun. Everything in the facility will operate from either the solar cells or the batteries.

WARNING:

NORTHWEST TERRITORY BEWARE

Residents of the Eniwetok Atoll in the Marshall Islands, evacuated 36 years ago in order for the US to conduct nuclear weapons tests, are suing the US government for \$500 million. The native Islanders, who were evacuated in 1947, are accusing the US of failing to restore their island to a safe and habitable condition. Between April 1948 and August 1949 more than 40 nuclear explosions devastated the Atoll.

In their lawsuit, the Native people claim that when they returned to their homeland in 1980, five of the Atoll's forty islets had been fully destroyed and that several other islands had been put off limits because of high radiation levels.

In another part of the world where no one hears about the Marshall Islands and the Nuclear tests, there is cause to fear. The first of hundreds of nuclear armed, ground hugging cruise missiles (to be dropped from bombers) entered into combat readiness on thursday December 16th at Griffith Air Force Base in New York. Canadians have been told that the cruise will be flown from there and tested in the Northwest territories and the Primrose Air-force Base in Alberta early in 1984.

Each bomb that is to be tested has the explosive power of 300,000 tons of TNT. The bomb that hit Hiroshima had the equivalent of 20,000 tons of TNT 1/15th the amount.

It would be wise if the People of Canada looked at the track record of the US in its relationship with other peoples' land they had used for testing nuclear bombs and how well they lived up to their responsibilities.

DUTCH STOP NUKE WASTE OCEAN DUMPING, FOR BETTER PLAN?

After 15 years of ocean dumping, the Dutch government has announced its plan to put an end to the dumping of radioactive waste in the ocean. Right now their only alternative is a land disposal site. Economic considerations seem to be preventing the Dutch from adopting the SYNROC waste disposal method. SYNROC is a method of imbedding radioactive waste in synthetic rock for storage, developed by professor Ted Ringwood, a biochemist at the Australian University in Canberra. SYNROC is made up of calcium carbonate, zircon oxide, aluminum oxide, and titanium oxide. The SYNROC process is similar to that used in the ceramic industry. Elements are mixed and heated to precise levels, releasing CO2 and producing crystalline compound of three minerals. Ten percent radioactive slurry is added and combined. Excess liquids are tapped off and the desired material pressed into blocks then forced into steel drums and stored in drilled dumping sites as opposed to using abandoned salt mine shafts.

There seems to be some controversy over whether or not this system works and whether it is financially feasible. The opposition (the French, British, Germans, Belgium, and the US) have been, for 20 years now, researching vitrification, which is storage of waste in glass silicate (Borosilica).

Experiments with SYNROC have been tried to stimulate 10,000 years of storage and a plan for a 1 million year experiment is in the process. Experiments with both SYNROC and Glass have been done at the Catholic University in Washington DC and they found that unless the aluminum was removed from the SYNROC, acids created by radiation and water quickly eroded the structure and released the trapped waste.

Dutch geochemist, Professor Schuiling likes the SYNROC method but would like to have the containers made of copper, titanium or iron nickel alloy and have them placed in huge crystalline mines 500 meters to 1 kilometer deep in an area where there hasn't been any earth movement for 500 million years and with no

SHORT NOTES

change in that stability forecasted.

Dutch news reports suggest that the Australian government may consider offering Australia as a site for such a central dumping site. It would be interesting to know exactly where in Australia these proposed sites are located, considering that the Aboriginal Peoples land there is already being used as sites for mining, milling and enriching uranium which is leased to foreign multinationals.

Let us hope the Dutch government and its people will consider the Aboriginal people in this case.

Sources for this article came from WISE and THINK.

MIDWIVES BIRTH AN ALLIANCE

Midwives have organized into the Midwives Alliance of North America (MANA), founded to promote midwifery and natural childbirth, to foster cooperation among midwives, and to represent the profession. The organization has identified needs as improved communication and support among midwives; education programs, development of competency standards; midwifery research and networking with other health care organizations. MANA plans to publish THE PRACTICING MIDWIFE JOURNAL: information may be obtained from Edine Frohman at (613) 964-3571).

"TRADITIONAL STEPS TO HEALING: CURANDERISMO"

Plans are now underway for a conference entitled "Traditional Steps to Healing: Curanderismo" to be held in the mountains of Central California the second weekend in April. The conference is being organized by the Consejo Tradicional de la Salud/Council for Traditional Health with the objective of bringing about a greater understanding of the traditional methods of healing that have been utilized in the Chicano/Mexicano community throughout the history of this continent. The conference will bring together not only known and respected curanderos, as well as community people, but also professionals from the medical field who have an interest in integrating traditional healing wisdom with modern medical practice for the good of the community. To insure this goal, the conference is also inviting respected medical and academic professionals who are knowledgeable about the study of curanderismo. Furthermore, because the basis of curanderismo is indigenous, the conference will include as an integral part of the agenda, spiritual people and doctors from the northern and southern indigenous traditions. In this way, the common heritage of the people with originalities to this land will be emphasized and understanding among the people, will be strengthened.

CONFERENCE LOCATION and DATES Mosqueda Center

April 8,9,10, 1983
4670 East Butler
Fresno, CA

IDAHO COURT AWARDS INDIVIDUAL NEZ PERCE INDIANS \$108,000 FOR TAKING OF LAND

The Federal District Court in Idaho recently ruled that Nez Perce County, Idaho is liable for damages in the amount of \$108,000 for wrongfully taxing and taking trust property from several individual members of the Nez Perce Tribe. In 1923 the County began imposing a property tax on the Indian property in violation of the previous court order prohibiting such taxation. The County deeded the property to itself for nonpayment of the taxes and sold it in 1937 to private non-Indian individuals by way of a tax sale.

The Indians originally filed the case in 1972. In 1977 the United States joined suit with the Indians. Two years later the District Court ordered the return of the

property to the United States in trust for the Indians, and exempted it from taxation. However, the Court further held that the Indians were not entitled to an award of damages due to the fifty-four year delay on the part of the United States in initiating the legal action.

The recent Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals decision reversed the District Court ruling that damages could be awarded. The Court of Appeals went on to state however that the delay on the part of the United States could be weighed in calculating the amount of the award.

On remand, the District Court awarded damages based on the present value of the rental that could have been earned from the property. The total award, \$216,000, was reduced by the Court by fifty percent as a result of the dilatory manner in which the United States had exercised its role as trustee for the property.

The individual Nez Perce plaintiffs were represented by the Native American Rights Fund and Idaho Legal Services.

REGIME ACQUITS CORRUPT FUNCTIONARIES

The officials of Romeo Lucas Garcia's government, who were accused of corruption after March 23rd coup, will be set free because of lack of evidence. Of the forty officials detained, the majority have been freed. The last 14 detained are waiting to be set free. On the other hand, none of the high military commanders blamed for corruption were charged for the 13,500 murders, that according to the Guatemalan Human Rights Commission, were committed during 1981 by the security forces of Lucas regime. One of the main justifications for the coup d'etat has lost its validity, because Rios Montt promised "to punish all corrupt officials who emptied the nation's coffers."

KILI RADIO

PINE RIDGE, S.D. — KILI went "on the air" in February, pushing 100,000 watts, enough power to reach one hundred and fifty miles and sound good. They are occupying a frequency granted to them by the Federal Communications Commission, 90.1 FM.

Thru the hard work and strong commitment of Dave Little and Mark Tilsen, KILI Radio now joins the ranks of the 15 other Indian-run radio stations across this land. Since the fall of 1979, KILI has been in the planning and building stages. Thru the work of the staff, KILI now has a very good looking list of credentials, being backed by the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Federation of Community Broadcasters and the Federal Communications Commission.

When the station went on the air in February we talked with Mark Tilsen who said "the station phones have been lit up since we've been on the air." They were getting calls from 150 miles away saying that they were reaching them loud and clear. The station is being well received by the community.

We are in a world where the ability to communicate amongst each other and the ability to move important information the fastest possible way is a priceless advantage and a resource that should be taken advantage of by Native People.

The Native people of this land have been communicating amongst each other, to the Creation and Creator, for eons. Electronic communications is a must in order for our peoples to move beyond the grasp of those who would rather see us die in our own ignorance.



Ice Horses

These are the ones who escape
after the last hurt is turned inward;
they are the most dangerous ones.
These are the hottest ones,
but so cold that your tongue sticks
to them and is torn apart because it is
frozen to the motion of hooves.
These are the ones who cut your thighs,
whose blood you must have seen on the gloves
of the doctor's rubber bands. They are
the horses who moaned like oceans, and
one of them a young woman screamed aloud;
she was the only one.
These are the ones who have found you.
These are the ones who pranced on your belly.
They chased deer out of your womb.
These are the ice horses, horses
who entered through your head,
and then your heart,
your beaten heart.

These are the ones who loved you.
They are the horses who have held you
so close that you have become

a part of them,
galloping
an ice horse
into fire.

— Joy Harjo

Late Summer Leaving

I woke up and turned on the light
You were dreaming
of white birds.
Your face tilted a soft angle
to the light.
your sleep you sense direction.
Your eyes are closed to the brightness
but you breathe in sun
like sunflowers do.
(The sense of light is like another
kind of touch,
like air and water to the skin.)
I am dressed now and see myself walk
away from you
in an arc.
I see a war shield on the wall
round and feathers leaning out.
There are geese in the north
cleaning their wings
in preparation for flight south,
and I can hear you
another voice in your dreaming
like birds
talking about some return home.
You turn your head
one more time before I go.
Your body shifts itself like a boat
on a strange tropical sea.
You face east.
The sun
comes up over the Sandias on star time.
It is another year,
another morning.
I watch it return in you
and say one last song to return home on.

— Joy Harjo

What I Should Have Said

There's nothing that says you can't
call. I spend the weekdays teaching
and moving my children from breakfast
to bedtime. What else, I feel like a traitor
telling someone else things I can't tell
to you. What is it that keeps us together?
Fingertip to fingertip, from Santa Fe
to Albuquerque?
I feel bloated with what I should say
and what I don't. We drift and drift, with
few storms of heat in between the motions.
I love you. The words confuse me.
Maybe they have become a cushion
keeping us in azure sky and in flight
not there, not here.
We are horses knocked out with tranquilizers
sucked into a deep deep sleeping for the comfort
and anesthesia death. We are caught between
clouds and wet earth
and there is no motion
either way

no life
to speak of.

— Joy Harjo

For Alva Benson, And For Those Who Have Learned To Speak

And the ground spoke when she was born.
Her mother heard it. In Navajo she answered
as she squatted down against the earth
to give birth. It was now when it happened,
now giving birth to itself again and again
between the legs of women.

Or maybe it was the Indian Hospital
in Gallup. The ground still spoke beneath
mortar and concrete. She strained against the
metal stirrups, and they tied her hands down
because she still spoke with them when they
muffled her screams. But her body went on
talking and the child was born into their
hands, and the children learned to speak
both voices.

She grew up talking in Navajo, in English
and watched the earth around her shift and change
with the people in the towns and in the cities
learning not to hear the ground as it spun around
beneath them. She learned to speak for the ground,
the voice coming through her like roots that
have long hungered for water. Her own daughter
was born, like she had been, in either place
or all places, so she could leave, leap
into the sound she had always heard,
a voice like water, like the gods weaving
against sundown in a scarlet light.

The child now hears names in her sleep.
They change into other names, and into others.
It is the ground murmuring, and Mt. St. Helens
erupts as the harmonic motion of a child turning
inside her mother's belly waiting to be born
to begin another time.

And we go on, keep giving birth and watch
ourselves die, over and over.
And the ground spinning beneath us
goes on talking.

— Joy Harjo

